

Malaysia, Singapore & Brunei

Perak (Chapter)

Edition 12th Edition, May 2013

Pages 33

Page Range 116-148



Coverage includes: Ipoh, Gopeng & Around, Cameron Highlands, Pulau Pangkor, Kuala Kangsar, Taiping & Around and Royal Belum State Park.

Useful Links:

Having trouble viewing your file? Head to [Lonely Planet Troubleshooting](#).

Need more assistance? Head to the [Help and Support page](#).

Want to find more chapters? Head back to the [Lonely Planet Shop](#).

Want to hear fellow travellers' tips and experiences?

[Lonely Planet's Thortree Community](#) is waiting for you!



Perak

05 / POP 2,258,428 / AREA: 21,035 SQ KM

Includes »

Ipoh.....	118
Gopeng & Around.....	125
Cameron Highlands	126
Pulau Pangkor	134
Kuala Kangsar	140
Taiping.....	142
Around Taiping	146
Royal Belum State Park.....	147

Best Places to Eat

- » Xin Quan Fang (p123)
- » Seri Ilhan (p139)
- » Kedai Kopi Prima (p145)
- » Nasi Lemak Ayam Kampung (p122)
- » Restoran Onn Kee (p123)

Best Places to Stay

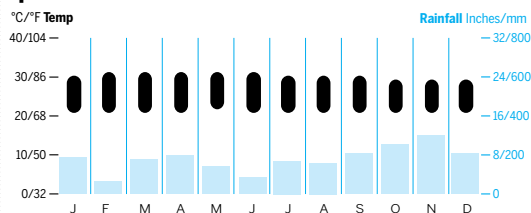
- » Sekeping Kong Heng (p120)
- » Tiger Rock Resort (p138)
- » Sentosa Villa (p143)
- » French Hotel (p120)
- » Belum Eco Resort (p147)

Why Go?

The old saying 'What do you prefer, the mountains or the ocean?' is pretty well received in Perak, Peninsular Malaysia's second-largest state. 'Perak' means 'silver' in Malay, but historians debate whether the word references the state's tin mines or the fish off its sandy coast. For travellers, this ambiguity simply reinforces the variety of the region. If you're not in the Cameron Highlands (in Pahang state, but accessible from here), Malaysia's premier hill retreat, or looking for elephants in the upland jungles of Royal Belum State Park, you're probably lazing along the Straits of Melaka on Pulau Pangkor. And even if you're the type who tends to shy from the extremes, Perak's lowland cities – the royal seat of Kuala Kangsar; the garden metropolis of Taiping; and sprawling Ipoh, with its enviable eating scene and colonial architecture – are eminently worthwhile destinations.

When to Go

Ipoh



Nov–Jan Head to Perak's high country to forget you're in sweaty Southeast Asia.

Aug Even at summer's peak, temperatures in the Cameron Highlands rarely exceed 21°C.

Oct–Nov Tourist numbers are low during Perak's wettest months.



Perak Highlights

- ① Visiting a tea plantation, hiking the hills or eating strawberries and scones in the **Cameron Highlands** (p126)
- ② Snacking on cheap eats in **Ipoh** (p122) – arguably one of Malaysia's most underrated food destinations
- ③ Lazing on one of the fine beaches on little-visited **Pulau Pangkor** (p134)
- ④ Caving, hiking, bird-watching or just getting generally outdoorsy at **Gopeng** (p125)
- ⑤ Soaking up the colonial charm of **Taiping** (p142)
- ⑥ Getting your feet muddy in the jungles of **Royal Belum State Park** (p147)
- ⑦ Taking a guided tour of historical tin-mining country in the **Kinta Valley** (p126)

History

Today's sultanate of Perak dates back to the early 16th century, when the eldest son of the last sultan of Melaka, Sultan Muzaffar Shah, established his own dynasty on the banks of Sungai Perak (Perak River). The state's rich tin deposits quickly made it a target of both covetous neighbours and foreign forces.

Dutch efforts in the 17th century to monopolise the tin trade were unsuccessful, but remains of their forts can still be seen on Pulau Pangkor (Pangkor Island) and at the mouth of Sungai Perak. In the 18th century the Bugis from the south and the Siamese from the north made concerted attempts to dominate Perak, but British intervention in the 1820s trumped them both.

The British had remained reluctant to meddle in the peninsula's affairs, but growing investment in the strait settlements, along with the rich tin mines of Perak, encouraged their interest. The mines also attracted a great influx of Chinese immigrants, who soon formed rival clan groups allied with local Malay chiefs, all of whom battled to control the mines.

The Perak sultanate was in disarray, and fighting among successors to the throne gave the British their opportunity to step in, making the first real colonial incursion on the peninsula in 1874. The governor, Sir Andrew Clarke, convened a meeting at Pulau Pangkor at which Sultan Abdullah was installed on the throne in preference to Sultan Ismail, the other major contender. The resultant Pangkor Treaty required the sultan to accept a British Resident, who would be consulted on all issues other than those relating to religion or Malay custom. One year later, Sultan Abdullah was forced, under threat of deposition, to accept administration by British officials on his behalf.

Various Perak chiefs united against this state of affairs, and the Resident, James WW Birch, was assassinated at Pasir Salak in November 1875. Colonial troops were called in to fight a short war, Sultan Abdullah was exiled and a new British-sanctioned sultan was installed. The next British Resident, Sir Hugh Low, had administrative experience in Borneo, was fluent in Malay and was a noted botanist – he even had a pitcher plant named after him (*Nepenthes Lowii*). He assumed control of taxes from the tin mines and practised greater intervention in state affairs. In 1877

he introduced the first rubber trees to Malaysia, and experimented with planting tea and coffee as well. The sultans, meanwhile, maintained their status, but were increasingly effete figureheads, bought out with stipends.

The first railway in the state, from Taiping to Port Weld (now known as Kuala Sepetang), was built in 1885 to transport the wealth of tin; the result was rapid development in Taiping and Ipoh. In 1896 Perak, along with Selangor, Pahang and Negeri Sembilan, became part of the Federated Malay States. The Resident system persisted, however, even after the Japanese invasion and WWII, ending only when Perak became part of the Federation of Malaya in 1948. Perak joined the new independent state of Malaysia in 1957.

Ipoh

POP 704,572

Ipoh is one of Malaysia's more pleasant mid-sized cities, chock full of colonial architecture, faded tropical mansions, friendly folks and some of the country's best food. The elegant layout and design of the city's 'Old Town' speaks to the wealth once generated here from Kinta Valley tin mines; in its day, Ipoh was one of the wealthiest cities in Southeast Asia. Today, the city can be approached as a worthwhile urban interlude, or as a convenient gateway to Pulau Pangkor and the Cameron Highlands.

Sights

NORTHERN IPOH

FREE **Muzium Darul Ridzuan** MUSEUM
(2020 Jln Panglima Bukit Gantang Wahab; ☎9.30am-5pm) North of the *padang* (field or grassy area), this museum is housed in a 1926 villa built for a wealthy Chinese tin miner. Although being renovated when we were in town, previously the museum has featured less than inspiring displays that recount the history of tin mining (downstairs) and forestry (upstairs) in Perak. The occasional temporary exhibitions are more interesting.

OLD TOWN

Ipoh's grand colonial architecture, a mixture of gleaming whitewash and romantic dilapidation, is found in the Old Town, west of the Sungai Kinta.

IPOH'S TEMPLE CAVES

The hills that surround Ipoh are riddled with caves that are believed to be a great source of spiritual power, and over the years meditation grottoes became large-scale temples. The caves are relatively difficult to reach by public transport; **Mr Raja** (☎012-524 2357), a local guide, can take two or more people on a half-day trip to all three for around RM320.

Sam Poh Tong (☉9am-4pm) A few kilometres south of Ipoh is the largest cave temple in Malaysia. The main attraction here is the turtle pond, where locals bring turtles to release in the hope of balancing their karma. Inside the temple is a huge cavern with a small reclining Buddha, and smaller vases set about it. The ornamental garden in front of the temple is quite scenic, and pomelo (a citrus fruit) stalls line the highway. The temple can be reached by any Kampar-bound bus from Ipoh's local bus station.

Perak Tong (☉8am-5pm) Founded in 1926 by a Buddhist priest, this temple extends back into an impressive complex of caverns and grottoes with amazing murals on the interior walls, including some interesting juxtapositions of Theravada Buddhas from Southeast Asia and Chinese Buddhas and Buddhist saints. The cave is located 6km north of Ipoh. From the local bus station, buses bound for Kuala Kangsar can stop at Perak Tong.

Gua Kok Look Tong (☉7am-7pm) To get off the beaten path, you can visit this smaller, more serene temple. At the cave temple's entrance, climb up to the Three Sages in the central cavern. At the back is a fat Chinese Buddha of Future Happiness sitting in the company of three other Bodhisattvas. Behind the cave is an ornamental garden with ponds and pagodas. Gua Kok Look Tong is a long walk from Sam Poh Tong; the easiest way to reach it is on a guided tour with Mr Raja.

FREE Train Station

HISTORIC BUILDING

(Map p120; Jln Panglima Bukit Gantang Wahab) Known locally as the 'Taj Mahal', and dating from 1914, Ipoh's train station is a blend of Moorish and Victorian architecture designed in the 'Raj' style you see everywhere in India.

Town Hall

HISTORIC BUILDING

(Map p120; Jln Panglima Bukit Gantang Wahab, Dewan Bandaran; ☉8am-5pm) Ipoh's Town Hall dates back to 1916. Not open to the public.

Court House

HISTORIC BUILDING

(Mahkanah Tinggi; Map p120; Jln Panglima Bukit Gantang Wahab) Ipoh's Court House was built in 1928 by government architect AB Hubbock – the same architect who designed the city's train station and Town Hall. Not open to the public.

FREE Birch Memorial

Clock Tower

MONUMENT

(Map p120; Jln Dato' Sagor) The clock tower was erected in 1909 in memory of James WW Birch, Perak's first British Resident, who was murdered at Pasir Salak. The friezes on the clock tower are meant to illustrate the

growth of civilisation, featuring figures such as Moses, Buddha, Shakespeare and Charles Darwin. A figure representing Mohammed has since been erased. The road on which this memorial stands has been renamed for one of Birch's killers, who are seen today as nationalists.

Royal Ipoh Club

HISTORIC BUILDING

(Map p120; Jln Panglima Bukit Gantang Wahab) A mock-Tudor building dating back to 1895, and overlooking the playing fields of the *padang*. Still a centre of exclusivity, and not open to the public.

St Michael's Institution

HISTORIC BUILDING

(Map p120; Jln SP Seenivasagam) On the *padang*'s northern flank is this neo-Gothic, three-storey colonial school with arched verandahs, founded by the Catholic La Salle brothers in 1927. Not open to the public.

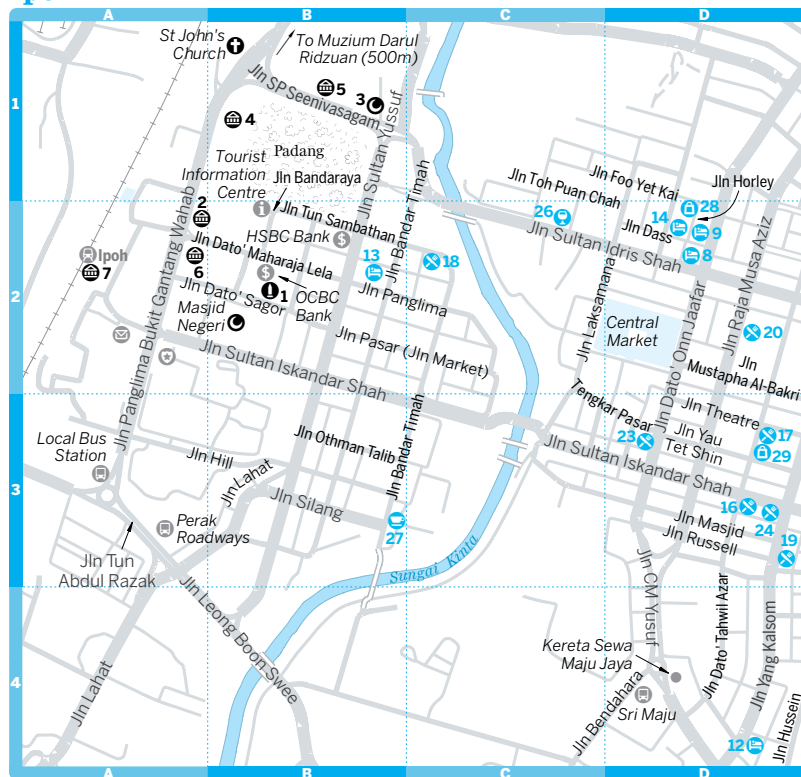
FREE Masjid India Muslim

MOSQUE

(Map p120; Jln SP Seenivasagam; ☉8am-5pm) Built in the Mogul style in 1908 for the local Indian population. Only Muslims are allowed inside.

Ipoh

PERAK IPOH



Activities

The best way to cover all of the colonial-era architecture in Ipoh's Old Town is via a walking tour. You can do a self-led tour, using the excellent *Ipoh Heritage Trail* maps 1 and 2, available at Ipoh's tourist information centre.

Ipoh Heritage Walk

WALKING TOUR

(RM20; ☀8am-noon Sat) If you're in town on a Saturday, consider doing the walking tour led by **Mr Raja** (☎012-524 2357) or **Rose-lyn Lim** (☎012-500 9400). The tour starts at Ipoh's train station at 8am, taking three hours.



Sleeping

Most of Ipoh's hotels are found in New Town on the eastern side of Sungai Kinta. There are some interesting midrange and top-end hotels in and around Ipoh, but the town's budget places are generally a sorry lot.



Sekeping Kong Heng

HOTEL \$\$

(Map p120; ☎012-227 2745; www.sekeping.com/kongheng/home.html; Jln Bandar Timah; r RM200-800; ☎☎) Unless we told you, you'd probably never spot this sexy new hotel cleverly built over and around an ancient cafe. Fittingly, the eight standard rooms are designed to blend in with the structure's original elements – think peeling paint, worn wood floors and chipped plaster. The two huge family rooms up the ante, taking up an entire floor each and featuring elevated beds in glass air-conditioned cubes and walls made from metal screens and vines. Easily the quirkiest place to stay in Ipoh, if not all of northern Malaysia.



French Hotel

HOTEL \$\$

(Map p120; ☎241 3030; 60-62 Jln Dato' Onn Jaafar; r RM138-168; ☎☎) No French maids here, but you will find an attractive and competent midrange hotel. The French actually goes



back several decades, but a recent renovation has left the rooms feeling modern and functional. The hotel's location in New Town is convenient and staff are friendly and know what they're doing.

Tune Hotel

HOTEL \$\$\$

(Map p120; ☎ nationwide 03-962 5888; www.tunehotels.com; Jln Dass; r RM110; 🍷🍷) AirAsia's hotel chain now has an Ipoh branch. It's definitely a budget hotel – the base price increases as you tack on everything from towels to air-con – but it's at least as comfortable and competent as most midrange places. The price quoted above was for a walk-in with most amenities.

D'Eastern Hotel

HOTEL \$\$\$

(Map p120; ☎ 254 3936; 118 Jln Sultan Idris Shah; r/ste RM98/268; 🍷🍷🍷) D'Eastern is your typical, classic-feeling Southeast Asia mid-ranger: huge rooms with dark woods (complemented by tacky paintings), carpet, big

functional bathrooms and capable staff. It's not new, but it's clean and it works.

Indulgence

BOULIQUE HOTEL \$\$\$

(☎ 255 7051; www.indulgencerestaurant.com; 14 Jln Raja Dihilir; r incl breakfast RM420, ste RM629-790; 🍷🍷) The seven rooms in this 1930s-era mansion span a variety of styles – from Thai to Roccoco – all with a classically girly aesthetic. Yet even the most macho of travellers will find them huge and sumptuous-feeling, and the hotel and attached restaurant both get great reviews. Indulgence is located, somewhat inconveniently, just east of central Ipoh.

Impiana Hotel

HOTEL \$\$

(☎ 255 5555; www.impiana.com; 18 Jln Raja Dr Nazrin Shah; incl breakfast r RM250-500, ste RM1000-2500; 🍷🍷🍷) The Impiana is your best bet for a reputable four-star chain hotel relatively close to the city. Rooms are big and stylish, and you can expect the usual amenities and facilities. An impending renovation will hopefully erase the reminders of a previous life that appears to date back to the 1980s. The Impiana is located just east of central Ipoh; a taxi here will cost around RM10.

Banjaran Hot Springs Retreat

RESORT \$\$\$

(☎ 210 7777; www.thebanjaran.com; 1 Persiaran Lagun Sunway 3; villas incl breakfast RM1360-2500; 🍷🍷🍷) This is an exclusive spa resort at the base of limestone cliffs, 8km northeast of Ipoh. The 26 villas have features such as private pools and Jacuzzi fed by the natural hot springs, and spa activities include a thermal steam cave and ice bath. Transport can be arranged by the resort.

New Caspian Hotel

HOTEL \$

(Map p120; ☎ 242 3327; 6-10 Jln Jubilee; r RM72-92; 🍷) A fresh coat of paint has done wonders for this old-school hotel. Rooms remain emphatically budget-level, but are bright, clean, and have TV and air-con and free wi-fi. It's probably the best budget choice we came across in Ipoh, although it's worth mentioning that communicating in English may be a problem here.

YMCA

HOSTEL \$

(☎ 254 0809; www.ymca-ipoh.com; 211 Jln Raja Musa Aziz; dm RM18, r RM60-80; 🍷🍷) Ostensibly Ipoh's only real backpacker accommodation, the YMCA features cheap-n-tidy dorm beds and institutional-but-clean budget rooms. It's located about 1km north of the centre

Ipoh

📍 Sights

- 1 Birch Memorial Clock Tower B2
- 2 Court House A2
- 3 Masjid India Muslim B1
- 4 Royal Ipoh Club B1
- 5 St Michael's Institution B1
- 6 Town Hall A2
- 7 Train Station A2

🏨 Sleeping

- 8 D'Eastern Hotel D2
- 9 French Hotel D2
- 10 Hotel Robin E3
- 11 New Caspian Hotel E3
- 12 Ritz Garden Hotel D4
- Ritz Kowloon Hotel (see 12)
- 13 Sekeping Kong Heng B2
- 14 Tune Hotel D2

🍴 Eating

- 15 Evening Hawker Stalls E2
- 16 Famous Mee Hakka D3
- 17 Funny Mountain Soya Bean D3
- 18 Lee Heng Fatt C2
- 19 M. Salim D3
- 20 Medan Selera Dato' Tawhil Azar D2
- 21 Ming Court E2
- 22 Nasi Lemak Ayam Kampung E4
- 23 Restoran Onn Kee D3
- 24 Xin Quan Fang D3

🍷 Drinking

- 25 Bricks & Barrels E1
- 26 Over Time C2
- 27 Sin Yoon Loong B3

🛍 Shopping

- 28 Flea Market D2
- 29 Gerbang Malam D3

of Ipoh; follow Jln Raja Musa Aziz until you reach the northern end of the large park.

Ritz Garden Hotel

HOTEL \$\$

(Map p120; ☎242 7777; www.ritzgardenhotel.com; 86 Jln Yang Kalsom; incl breakfast r/ste RM170-600/550-2300; 🍽🍷🍺) Formerly fancy, now staunchly midrange, this hotel has seen better days, but rooms are clean and functional. Facilities, from pool to cafe, are perks.

Ritz Kowloon Hotel

HOTEL \$

(Map p120; ☎254 7778; 92-96 Jln Yang Kalsom; incl breakfast r/ste RM78-89/118-148; 🍽🍷) The rooms here won't inspire any postcards home, but all have windows (a luxury in this price range), and breakfast and free wi-fi make them a pretty good deal.

Hotel Robin

HOTEL \$

(Map p120; ☎242 1888; 100-110 Jln Mustapha Al-Bakry; r/ste RM53-63/80-103; 🍽) The better of Ipoh's Chinese-owned budget places. Zero character, but rooms are clean and the owner speaks English.



Eating

Foodies rejoice, as Ipoh is home to one of Malaysia's more underrated street food scenes. The excellent range of options are predominately Chinese and Malay; for Western food consider the hotel restaurant at Indulgence (p121) or the bar snacks at Over Time (p123) or Bricks & Barrels (p123).

TOP CHOICE Nasi Lemak Ayam Kampung

MALAY \$

(Map p120; 43-45 Jln Ali Pitchay; mains RM5.50-30; ☎4.30pm-2.30am) This popular restaurant is the place to come for fancy-pants and delicious *nasi lemak* (rice boiled in coconut milk, served with fried *ikan bilis* – dried sardines or anchovies – peanuts and a curry dish). It serves a few variations on the dish, with sides ranging from the house fried chicken to cockles. Don't miss the deliciously tart and peppery eel soup.

M. Salim

MALAY \$

(Map p120; cnr Jln Yang Kalsom & Jln Che Tak; mains RM3-20; ☎6.30am-12.30am Sat-Thurs, 6.30am-1pm & 2pm-12.30am Fri) This longstanding and tidy restaurant does tasty versions of Indian-Muslim (also known as Mamak) faves. Think rich *nasi beryani*, huge *murta-bak* (roti filled with pieces of mutton, chicken or vegetables) and a dauntingly large fish-head curry – all of which should ideally be accompanied by the delicious house mango juice, here supplemented with lychee.

Indulgence

INTERNATIONAL \$\$

(www.indulgencerestaurant.com; 14 Jln Raja Dihilir; mains RM28-59; ☎9am-11.30pm Wed-Sun) Located in the hotel of the same name, Indulgence does progressive yet homey-feeling cuisine; think poached cucumber barrels with toppings of smoked salmon, lamb rashers, cottage cheese, and lined with chilli and olive

oil tapenade. Intriguing, but if we're being honest, we never made it past the delicious pastries and the one-of-a-kind Earl Grey *teh tarik* (Malaysian-style sweet tea).

Lee Heng Fatt

CHINESE \$

(Map p120; Jln Tun Sambathan; mains from RM2.60; ☺dinner) Virtually the only restaurant open after dark in Old Town, Lee Heng Fatt serves *hor mee*, your choice of dumplings (fish, pork, tofu) in broth served with wheat noodles. It also has a huge and delicious selection of fresh fruit juices – try the cucumber and apple.

Funny Mountain Soya Bean

CHINESE \$

(Map p120; 49 Jln Theatre; mains RM0.90-4.80; ☺breakfast & lunch) Funny Mountain is immensely popular for two dishes: bean-curd pudding and soy-bean milk. The curd, served with a bit of syrup and/or grass jelly, is smooth and sweet, while the drink is rich and refreshing.

Medan Selera Dato' Tawhil Azar

MALAY \$

(Map p120; Jln Raja Musa Aziz; mains RM2-8; ☺dinner) Better-known as the Children's Playground, this large food centre has mostly

Malay stalls arranged around a small square filled with slides and swings.

Evening Hawker Stalls

CHINESE, HAWKER \$

(Map p120; Jln Sultan Idris Shah; mains RM3-10; ☺dinner) This street is home to at least 30 vendors, mostly serving cheap and tasty Chinese dishes.



Drinking

Bricks & Barrels

BAR

(Map p120; 28-30 Jln Lau Ek Ching; ☺4pm-1am) A surprisingly sophisticated place for Ipoh, Bricks & Barrels serve a good selection of beers – including imported draught beer – and a few single malts as well. It was the most popular place in town when we passed through, and there's live music from 9pm on weekends.

Over Time

BAR

(Map p120; www.overtime.asia; 59 Jln Sultan Idris Shah; ☺11am-3am) A brew pub with an assertively clubby feel, Over Time serves three kinds of draught beer – aromatic, lager and *dunkel* (dark beer) – along with a menu of meaty Western and Asian dishes (RM14 to RM55).

IPOH'S BEST EATS

They say it's the water: Ipoh has a glowing reputation as a food city, and locals believe that deposits from the rich karst formations around town seep into the groundwater, making the city's food unique. We tend to agree, and with this in mind, here's some of the city's best dishes and where to eat them:

Curry mee A combination of rice and wheat noodles in a spicy, rich and often oily broth, served with chicken, pork and shrimp. Arguably the best place to eat it is at **Xin Quan Fang** (Map p120; 174 Jln Sultan Iskandar Shah; mains from RM3.80; ☺breakfast & lunch), but be ready for a wait; the family here has been making the dish for decades, and didn't get their loyal following by rushing.

Ayam tauge Tender boiled chicken served with Ipoh's fat bean sprouts and rice (the latter cooked in chicken broth) or a bowl of rice noodles is probably the dish most closely associated with Ipoh. **Restoran Onn Kee** (Map p120; 51 Jln Yau Tet Shin; mains from RM3; ☺1:30pm-3am) does a good version, or you could try any other of the several restaurants nearby that specialise in the dish.

Kopi putih The method of roasting beans with palm-oil margarine was allegedly invented at **Sin Yoon Loong** (Map p120; 15A, Jln Bandar Timah; coffee drinks from RM1.40; ☺7am-6pm Mon-Sat). Kopi putih is known in English as Ipoh white coffee.

Hakka mee Flat wheat noodles topped with salty ground pork, and served with a side bowl of broth with fish and pork balls and tofu, is best at **Famous Mee Hakka** (Map p120; 163 Jln Sultan Iskandar Shah; mains RM3; ☺7am-noon).

Dim Sum Ipoh's Chinese community is predominately of Cantonese origin, so it's not a surprise that dim sum is popular here. Although it's not as flashy as the other dim-sum palaces nearby, locals eat at **Ming Court** (Map p120; 32-36 Jln Leong Sin Nam; dim sum RM2.20-4.90; ☺6am-noon Wed-Mon).



Shopping

Gerbang Malam

MARKET

(Night Market; Map p120; Jln Dato' Tahwil Azar; ☉7pm-midnight) Ipoh's night market is expansive, but its offerings are mostly limited to sports-related clothing and a few snacks.

Flea Market

MARKET

(Map p120; Jln Horley; ☉6am-noon Sun) A busy flea market virtually engulfs the streets surrounding Tune Hotel every Sunday morning.



Information

Ipoh Hospital

HOSPITAL

(☎253 2533; <http://hipoh.moh.gov.my>; Jln Hospital) Ipoh's main hospital is located about 1.5km northwest of the centre of town; a taxi here should cost about RM10.

Tourist Information

Centre

TOURIST INFORMATION

(☎208 3155; Jln Bandaraya; ☉8am-5pm Mon-Fri & 10am-3pm Sat)



Getting There & Away

Air

Ipoh's airport, **Sultan Azlan Shah Airport** (www.ipoh.airport-authority.com), is about 3km southeast of the city centre; a taxi here from central Ipoh costs RM20. At the time of research, **Firefly** (☎nationwide 03-7845 4543; www.firefly.com.my; Sultan Azlan Shah Airport) was the only operator, with twice-daily flights to Singapore (1½ hours, RM300).

Bus

Ipoh's long-distance bus station, known as **Medan Gopeng** (Jln Raja Dr Nazrin Shah), is 5km south of the city centre and is linked by shuttle buses to the local bus station (RM1.30, every 15 minutes from 6am to 6.15pm) and taxis (RM15). We were informed that the bus station is scheduled to move to a new location at Meru Raya, approximately 8km north of Ipoh, probably by the time you read this.

Destination	Duration (hr)	Fare (RM)	Frequency
Alor Setar	4	21.70-26	Frequent, 9am-4.50pm
Butterworth/George Town	2	13.90-17.60	Frequent, 8.30am-8.30pm
Hat Yai (Thailand)	6-7	45	12.30pm & midnight
Johor Bahru	7	48.50	Frequent, 9am-11pm

Destination	Duration (hr)	Fare (RM)	Frequency
Kuala Lumpur (also KLIA/LCCT)	2½-3	17.50-43	Hourly, 4.30am-9.30pm
Kota Bharu	6	33.30	9.30am, 10am, 11.30am & 10pm
Lumut (for Pulau Pangkor)	2	8	12.30pm, 1.30pm, 3pm, 4.30pm & 5.45pm
Melaka	5	33-34	Frequent, 9.30am-12.45am
Singapore	8	56-75	Frequent, 8.30am to 10.30am & 8.30pm to 11pm
Tanah Rata (for Cameron Highlands)	2	15	Frequent, 9.30am-5.30pm

Closer to town, **Sri Maju** (☎253 8898; Jln Bendahara) has its own station, from where it runs 'luxury' buses to many of the same destinations as Medan Gopeng.

Perak Roadways (☎254 4895; Jln Tun Abdul Razak), whose office is a short walk from the local bus station, runs regular buses to Lumut (for Pulau Pangkor; RM8.50, two hours) with frequent departures from 6.50am to 7.30pm, and Gerik (for Royal Belum State Park; two hours, RM13.10) with departures at noon, 2.30pm, 4.30pm and 6.30pm.

The local bus station is off a roundabout south of the train station.

Destination	Duration (hr)	Fare (RM)	Frequency
Kampar (for Sam Poh Tong temple cave)	20min	1.50	Every 15min, 6am-6.15pm
Gopeng	40min	2.70	Every 15min, 6am-6.15pm
Kuala Kangsar	80min	R6.20	Every 15min, 5.30am-8.45pm
Taiping	1½hr	8.40	Hourly, 6.15am-7pm
Tanah Rata (for Cameron Highlands)	2½hr	16.80	8am, 11am, 3pm & 6pm

Train

Ipoh's train station is on the main Singapore–Butterworth line. There are daily trains (including a very frequent intercity service) to Kuala Lumpur (RM22 to RM40, 4½ hours) and Butterworth (RM21 to RM36, 3½ hours), the latter continuing to Hat Yai in Thailand (RM34 to RM87, 10½ hours); check with www.ktmb.com.my for the latest info on fares and schedules.

i Getting Around

Most of central Ipoh is accessible on foot, although transport – public or hired – is necessary to get to the attractions outside of town.

For a car with driver, contact **Mr Raja** (☎012-524 2357), a local guide who charges RM130 per day for destinations around Ipoh. Car hire is handled by **Kereta Sewa Maju Jaya** (☎255 5510; www.carrentalipoh.com; Jln C.M. Yusuff; ☎8am–8pm), who also has an office at Ipoh's airport.

Gopeng & Around

If city life isn't your thing, relish in the knowledge that less than 30km away from Ipoh lies a little-known and burgeoning outdoor destination. Gopeng, a relatively well-preserved former tin-mining outpost, has palpable and interesting remnants of the boom town it once was, but the real highlight is the hilly rural area approximately 6km east of the town – a base for rafting, caving, trekking and other outdoor activities.

👁 Sights

Gua Tempurung

CAVE

(www.guatempurung.com; tours RM66–22; ☎9am–3pm Sat–Thurs) The 'Coconut Cave', so-called for its domelike interior, is located about 7km from Gopeng. It's nearly 2km long, spanning five separate domed rooms; inside you'll find impressive cave formations, an underground river and the usual creepy cave animals. Gua Tempurung can only be explored by a guided tour, available at the cave entrance or, if you don't have transport, via a visit arranged with one of the three resorts outside Gopeng. There are four tours (between 45 minutes and four hours), which range from walking along easy marked paths to sloggng through a river.

FREE Kinta Nature Park

WILDLIFE RESERVE

Located 6km south of Batu Gajah, this is a yet to be gazetted nature area. Based around a lake that was formed as a result

of tin mining, wetlands are home to an estimated 130 species of birds as well as other animals, including otters. Kinta Nature Park can be visited via **Mr Raja** (☎012-524 2357), an Ipoh-based tour guide, or via a guided tour organised at Gopeng Rainforest Resort.

Heritage House

MUSEUM

(Jln Pasar; admission by donation; ☎9am–3pm Sat–Sun) A restored shophouse decorated with original furniture and explored via an informal tour. Located off the main highway near Gopeng's monument roundabout.

Muzium Gopeng

MUSEUM

(Jln Eu Kong; admission by donation; ☎9am–5pm Fri–Tue) A somewhat random collection of old-fashioned housewares and vintage furniture supplemented with displays on local history. Located in an antique shophouse along the road that leads to Gopeng's bus station.



Activities

Any of the resorts can arrange guided activities including **rafting** (half-day per person RM150), **rafflesia spotting** (half-day per person from RM80), **wet abseiling** (half-day per person RM100) and **caving** in Gua Tempurung (half-day per person RM40). Rafting and some of the more advanced caving excursions are only for groups of eight or more; in general, prices are cheaper the larger your group is.



Sleeping & Eating

About 6km east of Gopeng is a secluded wooded area home to three mostly similar resorts, all located within walking distance of hiking, rafting and a range of other outdoor activities. With the exception of Clearwater Sanctuary, the fee includes one night of accommodation and three meals; transport from Gopeng's bus station can be arranged for about RM10.

Clearwater Sanctuary

RESORT \$\$\$

(☎366 7433; www.cwsgolf.com.my; Batu Gajah; r RM250–475; 🍽🍷) This vast, rural-feeling retreat calls itself a golf resort, but it's really a lot more than that. Accommodation is more comfortable than it is luxurious, but the real highlight is its setting by a large lake and the host of activities, which include archery and fishing. Clearwater is located outside Batu Gajah, about 15km south of Ipoh, and the resort can provide transport for guests.

KINTA VALLEY HERITAGE LOOP

The area surrounding Ipoh was built on tin – literally and figuratively – and a fascinating half-day excursion can be made through the boom towns in the Kinta Valley that sprang up in the 1870s as a result of the ore. Unfortunately, infrequent public transport makes hiring a driver a necessity. **Mr Raja** (☎012 524 2357) is a native of Batu Gajah, the capital of Kinta District, and will drive visitors along the loop for RM20 per person, plus an additional RM130 for transport.

Leaving Ipoh, head south on Hwy 5, passing the present-day ghost towns of Lahat and Papan. After about 20km you'll reach **Batu Gajah**, an important settlement since the early 19th century. The town is a remarkably intact remnant of the colonial era, with a busy market and commercial area near the highway, and, on a hill (*changkat*) looking over the town, the British administrative zone, complete with mansions, churches, a hospital and – of course – a prison. The excellent *Batu Gajah Heritage Driving Trail*, available at Ipoh's tourist information office, provides a map of the town as well as details on the town's primary historical structures.

Continue 9km south to the **TT5 tin dredge** (admission adult/child RM5/3; ☎8.30am–noon & 1–6pm). Today an open-air museum, the now-defunct dredge dates back to 1936 and is one of the earliest of its type in Malaysia.

Returning to Batu Gajah, head east along Hwy A8, where after about 6km you'll reach **Kellie's Castle** (admission adult/child RM5/3; ☎9am–6pm). Also known as Kellie's Folly, it is one of those leftovers of British eccentricity you occasionally find scattered in some random corner of the old empire. Here's the story: in 1915 William Kellie Smith, a wealthy Scottish rubber plantation-owner and lover-of-all-things-India, commissioned the building to be the home of his son. Not only bricks, but artisans and labourers were sourced from India to build what would have been, if finished, one of the most magnificent residences in Malaysia. Poor Smith died in 1926 and the house was abandoned; today, the remaining six-storey structure is a well-tended tourist site.

About 500m from the castle is a **Hindu temple**, built for the artisans by Smith when a mysterious illness decimated the workforce and the remaining workers believed the gods needed to be appeased. To show their gratitude to Smith, the workers placed a figure of him, dressed in a white suit and pith helmet, among the Hindu deities on the temple roof. The temple is now semiderelict but still in use, and the resident priest will point out the statue of Smith.

After visiting Kellie's Castle, continue east until you reach Hwy 1, the former main north–south highway. Turn south to visit Gopeng – the town's historic centre is another remnant of the tin era – or turn north, where after 13km, you'll arrive back in Ipoh.

Adeline's Villa

(☎359 1651; www.adelinevilla.com; per person RM188–238; ☼) The most sophisticated – and most expensive – accommodation in the area, Adeline's takes the form of 10 rooms in cutesy wooden villas that can sleep up to nine people.

RESORT \$\$

My Gopeng Resort

(☎016-549 3777; www.mygopengresort.com; per person RM168) Resort with a campground-like feel. Rooms are basic but comfortable, and can sleep up to 24 people; bathrooms facilities are shared.

RESORT \$\$

Gopeng Rainforest Resort

(☎012-516 8200; www.gopengrainforest.com; per person RM98–108) The location here is stunning,

RESORT \$\$

but accommodation is very basic – think mattresses in fan-cooled structures with shared bathrooms. The food and activities get good reports.

i Getting There & Away

Gopeng's bus station is located about 300m east of Hwy 1. Frequent buses shuttle passengers the 13km between Gopeng and Ipoh from 6.30am to 10.30pm (RM2.70, 30 minutes).

Cameron Highlands

OK traveller, you've been sweating through the jungles, the beaches and the lowlands of Malaysia for weeks now. Another sticky day will make your clothes unwearable. Another

sweaty night and you'll lose the ability to sleep. We grant you a reprieve. Come to the Cameron Highlands.

This is Malaysia's most extensive hill station, an alpine landscape of blue peaks, green humps, fuzzy tea plantations, small towns and white waterfalls cutting throughout. Trekking, tea tasting and visiting local agrotourism sites is the done thing here. And best of all, with an altitude of 1300m to 1829m, the temperature rarely drops below 10°C or climbs above 21°C; practically cool enough to make you forget you're in Malaysia.

Though the Cameron Highlands – the colloquial name for the area that roughly encompasses the towns of Kampung Raja, Brinchang, Tanah Rata, Ringlet and environs – lie in Pahang, they're accessed from Perak.

Sights

Cameron Bharat Tea Plantation

TEA PLANTATION

(Map p128; bharattea.com.my; ☎8.30am-7pm) Located at the side of the road around 4km south of Tanah Rata, the views over this plantation are breathtaking. There are no guided tours here, but you can wander around parts of the plantation, and there's an attractively set tea house overlooking the estate. A taxi here will cost RM10. There's another **branch** (☎7.30am-6pm), likewise

equipped with a cafe, located 12km away on the main road heading northeast Brinchang, although the views aren't as impressive.

Sam Poh Temple

TEMPLE

(Map p128; Brinchang) As unexpected sites in the hills go, a temple dedicated to a Chinese eunuch and naval officer just about tops the list. This temple, just below Brinchang about 1km off the main road, is a brilliant pastiche of imperial Chinese regalia, statuary dedicated to medieval admiral and eunuch Zheng Ho and, allegedly, the fourth-largest Buddha in Malaysia.

Kok Lim Strawberry Farm

FARM

(Map p128; Brinchang; Time Tunnel admission adult/child RM5/3; ☎9am-5pm, Time Tunnel 8.30am-6.30pm) Just north of Brinchang, RM30 gets you the chance to be a labourer for the day and go home with 0.5kg of hand-picked strawberries. The attached **Time Tunnel** is a cheesy-but-fun underground passage stuffed full of 'antiques' and displays dedicated to local history.

FREE Ee Feng Gu Honey Bee Farm

FARM

(Map p128; www.eefenggu.com; Brinchang; ☎8am-7pm) A working apiary about 3km northeast of Brinchang, with pleasant, flower-filled gardens to walk around, and honey to buy. There's also an indoor maze (adult/child RM3/2) for the kids.

TEA COUNTRY

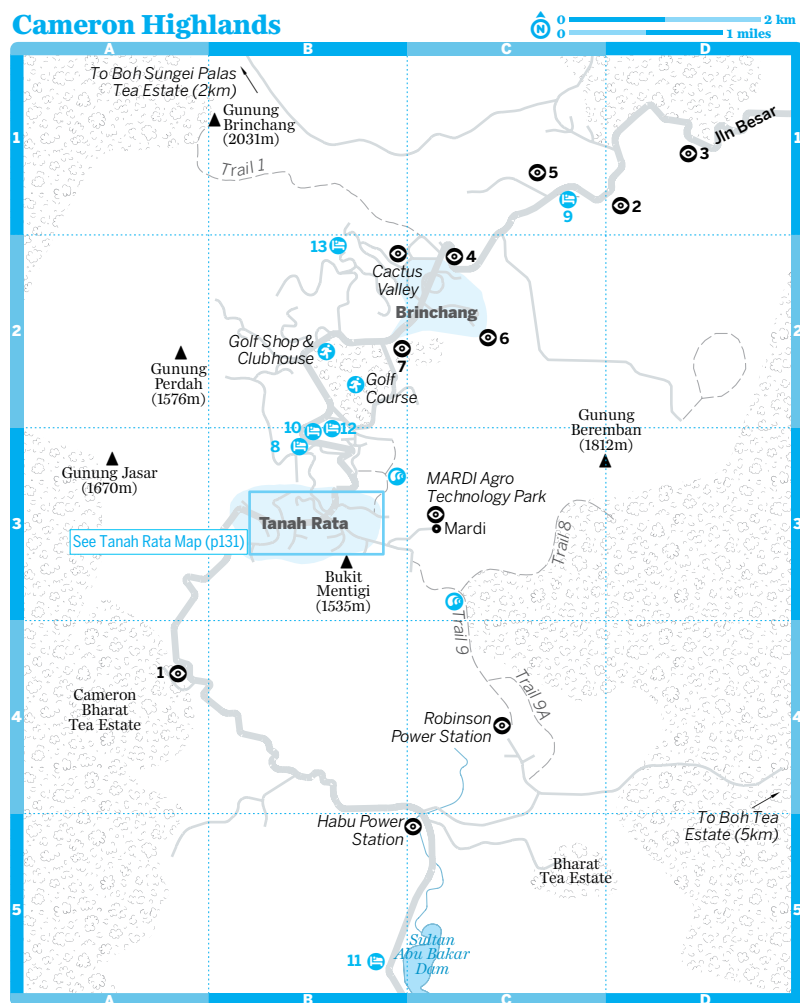
Even if you're a dedicated coffee drinker, don't miss the breathtakingly beautiful **Boh Sungei Palas Tea Estate** (www.boh.com.my; ☎9am-4.30pm Tue-Sun), set in an almost otherworldly green patchwork of hills and tea plants.

The narrow approach road leads past worker housing and a Hindu temple (tea pickers are predominantly Indian) to the modern visitor centre, where you can witness tea production first-hand. There's also a gift shop selling every version of Boh tea you can imagine and a modern **cafe** (☎9am-4.30pm Tue-Sun) where you can sip tea while looking out over the lush plantations below. Free 15-minute tours showing the tea-making process are conducted during opening hours. If you are in fact a tea drinker, we suggest doing one of the plantation's hour-long **Tea Appreciation Tours** (RM35; ☎9am, 11am, 1pm & 3pm Tue-Sun), which include a guided walk through tea plantations, a factory tour and tea sampling.

The estate is located in the hills north of Brinchang, off the road to Gunung Brinchang. Public buses running between Tanah Rata and Kampung Raja pass the turn-off to Gunung Brinchang. From there it's 4km along the winding road, after which it's another 15 minutes' walk downhill to the visitor centre. Taxis in Tanah Rata will take you to the estate and back for RM50.

Boh has another almost equally impressive **estate** (www.boh.com.my; admission free; ☎9am-4.30pm Tue-Sun) southeast of Tanah Rata and 8km off the main road. There's a small cafe and tours are given every 15 minutes from 9.30am to 4.15pm. Taxis in Tanah Rata will do a round-trip here for RM60.

Cameron Highlands



Cameron Highlands

Sights

- 1 Cameron Bharat Tea Plantation..... A4
- 2 Cameron Highlands Butterfly Farm D1
- 3 Ee Feng Gu Honey Bee Farm D1
- 4 Kok Lim Strawberry Farm C2
- 5 Raaju's Hill Strawberry Farm C1
- 6 Sam Poh Temple..... C2
- 7 Sri Tehndaythapany Swamy B2

Sleeping

- 8 Bala's Holiday Chalet B3
- 9 Equatorial C1
- 10 Hotel De'La Ferns B3
- 11 Lakehouse B5
- 12 Smokehouse B3
- 13 Strawberry Park Resort..... B2

Eating

- Smokehouse (see 12)

LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

JEK YAP: NATURE ENTHUSIAST

Jek Yap is a member of Kinta Heritage, a group of eight individuals seeking to promote Perak's rich natural heritage.

Is Perak a strong nature destination? What are some visit-worthy natural/protected areas? It is one of the richest states in Malaysia in terms of natural attractions. Royal Belum State Park possesses an immense wealth of flora and fauna, with much of the area still unexplored. Kinta Nature Park is the largest heronry in Malaysia; there are currently 180 species of birds found there. The nightly light show of the fireflies in the Matang Mangrove Forest Reserve is another excellent outing.

Is there any kind of flora or fauna found in Perak that isn't found anywhere else?

There are at least two species of *Rafflesia* only found in Perak; the parent plant of the national flower of Singapore is an orchid species endemic to the Kinta Valley; not to mention seasonal sightings of 10 species of hornbills in Royal Belum State Park.

Are Perak's natural areas under threat? Like any other natural area in this region they are threatened by human development.

What kind of outdoor/adventure activities does Perak offer? What's a good destination for outdoor activities? Perak offers golf, bird-watching, white-water rafting, tubing, kayaking, abseiling, jungle trekking, cycling and caving. Visitors basing themselves at Gopeng have easy access to all of these activities.

Cameron Highlands Butterfly Farm FARM
(Map p128; Brinchang; adult/child RM5/2; ☀9am-6pm Mon-Fri, 8.30am-7pm Sat-Sun) Home to a fluttering collection of tropical butterflies, including the majestic Raja Brooke.

FREE Raaju's Hill Strawberry Farm FARM
(Map p128; Brinchang; ☀8.30am-6.30pm) It may hold the attention of anyone with a keen interest in hydroponic strawberry cultivation, but the main reason for visiting is for the strawberry jam and ice cream.

Sri Tehndayuthapany Swamy TEMPLE
(Map p128; Brinchang; ☀7am-6pm) Located just south of Brinchang is this colourful Hindu place of worship – the Tamil Nadu-style sculptures were created by Indian artists, and the temple primarily serves the local tea-picking population.

Tours

The distance between sights plus infrequent public transport makes booking a guided tour a popular option in the Cameron Highlands. Most are half-day tours that focus on the tea plantation/strawberry picking/flower farm highlights of the area.

CS Travel & Tours TOUR
(Map p131; ☎491 1200; www.cstravel.com.my; 47 Jln Besar, Tanah Rata; ☀7.30am-7.30pm) This agency leads popular half-day 'countryside

tours' of the Highlands, leaving around 8.45am and 1.45pm (adult/child RM25/15). Longer tours such as the full-day 'adventure tour' (adult/child RM80/60) take in Gunung Brinchang and an Orang Asli village. Guides for the hiking trails can also be arranged.

Eco Cameron TOUR
(Map p131; ☎491 5388; www.ecocameron.com; 72A Psn Camellia 4, Tanah Rata; ☀8am-9.30pm) This outfit specialises in nature-oriented tours of the area – think hiking, orchid walks, bird-watching, insect-spotting – ranging in price from RM45 per person (half-day tours close to town) to RM120 per person (full-day tours outside of town).

Sleeping

Tanah Rata has the greatest spread of hotels in the Cameron Highlands, including several decent budget places. Brinchang, 4km north, also has a fair spread of accommodation, but most places are targeted at domestic tourists, so it's an awkward place to stay if you're dependent on public transport. There are a few interesting places to stay outside of the main towns, but private transport is a must.

The Highlands are at their busiest during the school holidays in April, August and December. During these times you should book accommodation in advance. Air-con is not necessary in the Cameron Highlands, and few, if any, hotels have it.

HIKING IN THE CAMERON HIGHLANDS

Besides getting in touch with your inner Englishman via tea and strawberries, the main thing to do in the Cameron Highlands is hike. Trailheads are generally clearly marked with yellow-and-black signboards, but it's worth mentioning that many of the trails aren't well maintained, and can be slippery and/or unclear. Always carry water, some food and rain gear to guard against the unpredictable weather. The following is a short-list of a few of the more popular trails:

Trail 1 This trail officially starts at white stone marker 1/5 on the summit of Gunung Brinchang (2031m), but we don't advise making this descent – it's a steep, muddy, overgrown trail, often closed for repairs. Instead, start your walk at the end point of the trail, at white stone marker 1/48 just north of Cactus Valley. This section of the trail should take about two hours to complete. From the summit take the 7km-long sealed road back to Brinchang through the tea plantations – a pleasant walk of about two hours.

Trail 4 One of the more popular trails starts next to the river just past Century Pines Resort in Tanah Rata. It leads to Parit Falls, but garbage from the nearby village finds its way here, and it's not the most bucolic spot. The falls can also be reached from the road around the southern end of the golf course. Both hikes are about half a kilometre.

Trail 8 This trail splits off Trail 9 just before Robinson Falls and is another steep three-hour approach to Gunung Beremban. It can be a strenuous trail, especially if you're walking away from the mountain.

Trail 9A Trails 9 and 9A start together 1.5km from the main road in Tanah Rata – follow the sign that says Robinson Falls and look for the footbridge. From here, the trail leads downhill past Robinson Falls to a metal gate, about 15 minutes away. Trail 9, which is not recommended, goes through the gate and follows the water pipeline down a steep, slippery incline through the jungle to the power station. We suggest you take Trail 9A, which branches to the left at the metal gate and, after about an hour's walk, emerges at the road that leads to Robinson Power Station. Follow this south to the main road, where you can either head east for another 5km to Boh Tea Estate, or west to Habu Power Station for buses back to Tanah Rata.

Smokehouse

BOUTIQUE HOTEL \$\$\$

(Map p128; ☎ 491 1215; www.thesmokehouse.com.my; incl breakfast r/stg RM365/450-710; 🍽️) This characterful old house dating back to 1937 looks as if it's been lifted straight from deepest Surrey, complete with a red British phone box outside. Indoors, the exposed beams, open fireplaces and chintzy decor complete the picture. Rooms, which are decked out with heavy antique furniture, are more comfy than luxurious, although, like the rest of the house, they possess their own English charm.

Smokehouse is located about 2km north of Tanah Rata along the road to Brinchang.

Hillview Inn

GUESTHOUSE \$\$\$

(Map p131; ☎ 491 2915; www.hillview-inn.com; 17 Jln Mentigi, Tanah Rata; r RM70-140; 🍽️) Located in a three-storey home at the edge of town, this midrange guesthouse has a variety of rooms, both with and without attached bathrooms, and supplemented with communal TV rooms and a ground-floor

cafe. Rooms vary in size and amenities, so ask to see a few.

Eight Mentigi

GUESTHOUSE \$

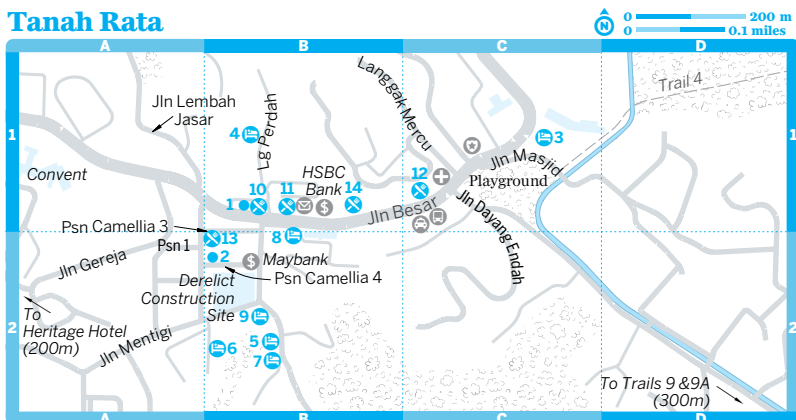
(Map p131; ☎ 491 5988; www.eightmentigi.com; 8A Jln Mentigi, Tanah Rata; r RM50-150; 🍽️) Two linked houses with simple but exceedingly clean rooms. A homey feel is provided by Smith, your kind host. Located at the western edge of town, on the small road that leads behind an unsightly abandoned building.

Hotel De'La Ferns

HOTEL \$\$\$

(Map p128; ☎ 491 4888; www.hoteldelaferns.com.my; r/stg RM380-580/680-1800; 🍽️) Hotel De'La Ferns is the type of multistorey mock-Tudor monstrosity that has come to define accommodation in the Cameron Highlands. Fortunately, the theme is relegated to the exterior, and inside you'll find large rooms decked out in an attractively subtle, yet modern theme. It's located about 1.5km north of Tanah Rata along the road to Brinchang.

Tanah Rata



Tanah Rata

Activities, Courses & Tours

- 1 CS Travel & Tours B1
- 2 Eco Cameron B2

Sleeping

- 3 Century Pines Resort C1
- 4 Daniel's Lodge B1
- 5 Eight Mentigi B2
- 6 Hillview Inn B2
- 7 KRS Pines B2
- 8 Planter's Hotel B2
- 9 Twin Pines B2

Eating

- 10 Jasmine Cafe B1
- 11 KouGen B1
- 12 Lord's Cafe C1
- May Flower (see 2)
- 13 Restaurant Bunga Suria B2
- 14 Restoran Sri Brinchang B1
- Rosedale Bistro (see 11)
- Vintage Café (see 12)

Planter's Hotel

HOTEL \$\$

(Map p131; ☎490 1001; www.plantershotel.com.my; 44A Jln Besar, Tanah Rata; r RM120-260; 🍽️) This is the place to stay if you don't need frills or atmosphere, and want to be in the middle of all the action in Tanah Rata. Premier rooms are vast, while standard rooms don't have windows. Rates increase by about 20% on Friday and Saturday.

KRS Pines

GUESTHOUSE \$

(Map p131; ☎491 2777; <http://twinpines.cameronhighlands.com>; 7 Jln Mentigi, Tanah Rata; dm/r RM15/35-110; 🍽️📶) KRS offers a range of shared and private rooms in a squattish tower block. All accommodation is spic and span, making this a excellent borderline budget/midrange option. Prices rise by about 30% on weekends.

Heritage Hotel

HOTEL \$\$

(☎491 3888; www.heritage.com.my; Jln Gereja, Tanah Rata; incl breakfast r/st RM180-350/310-670; 🍽️)

This huge mock-Tudor hotel has 238 rooms at the western edge of town. If you can swing it, go for the larger, newer and more attractive rooms in the Deluxe Wing. All rooms have access to the hotel's facilities, which include a playground for kids, washing machines, pool table and library. Rates are about 20% more on weekends.

Daniel's Lodge

HOSTEL \$

(Map p131; ☎491 5823; danielslodge@hotmail.com; 9 Lg Perdah, Tanah Rata; dm/r RM12-15/35-55; 🍽️) The backpacker force remains strong at this longstanding hostel, also known as Kang's. There's a dorm upstairs, the cheapest rooms share bathrooms, and there are on-site facilities ranging from internet terminals (per hour RM3) to a bar, not to mention lots of inviting communal areas.

Twin Pines

HOSTEL \$

(Map p131; ☎491 2169; <http://twinpines.cameronhighlands.com>; 2 Jln Mentigi, Tanah Rata; r RM15-20; 🍽️)

Twin Pines is a good option for trekkers wanting backpacker rates with a less backpackery (read: party) atmosphere. The attic rooms are closetlike and feature little more than a mattress on the floor, but are a steal; other facilities are well kept.

Bala's Holiday Chalet

GUESTHOUSE \$\$

(Map p128; ☎491 1660; bala.reservation@gmail.com; incl breakfast r/ste RM140-250/280-380; @) The 25 rooms here are set in a mock-Tudor building, originally built as a boarding school in 1934. Many of the rooms are huge, making Bala's a good choice for families, but they can also feel a bit aged. Bala's is located 1.5km north of Tanah Rata – it's not the easiest place to get to if you don't have a car.

Century Pines Resort

HOTEL \$\$\$

(Map p131; ☎491 5115; www.centurypinesresort.com; 42 Jln Masjid; incl breakfast r/ste RM350-490/638-988; ☎) It's set in landscaped gardens at the eastern edge of Tanah Rata, but this complex is more hotel than resort. The rooms have a somewhat dated 1990s-era feel, but they're clean and comfortable, and come stocked with the kind of amenities – huge beds, TV, minibar, safe – that you'd expect for price.

Lakehouse

BOULIQUE HOTEL \$\$\$

(Map p128; ☎495 6152; www.lakehouse-cameron.com; incl breakfast r RM720, ste RM850-1170; @☎☎) Overlooking the lake 2km north of Ringlet is this English country house-style hotel with just 19 rooms. The relatively high room tariff is justified by classy touches like four-poster beds, antique furnishings and, in the Foster Suite, a real fireplace.

Strawberry Park Resort

RESORT \$\$\$

(Map p128; ☎491 1166; www.strawberryparkresorts.com; Brinchang; r RM550, ste 700-2200; @☎☎) A sprawling 'neo-Tudor' resort in the hills west of Brinchang, popular with package-tour groups and anyone needing a bit of pampering up in the hills. The Studio Suites are generous in size, and everybody has access to the indoor pool, tennis courts, sauna and spa. The resort is 2km from the main road along an inclining, windy road; you'll need a car to get here.

Equatorial

HOTEL \$\$

(Map p128; ☎496 1777; www.equatorial.com; Brinchang; r/ste RM180-420/320-620; @☎☎) Gi-normous modern hotel (290 rooms) located about 3km north of Brinchang. Rooms are large, albeit bland; deluxe rooms are located on higher floors and have bathtubs.



Eating

Tanah Rata is home to the majority of the area's restaurants – many with a Malay/Muslim feel, along with a few international cuisines thrown in for good measure. While most travellers should find something to please their palate, it's probably safe to say that people come to the Cameron Highlands for the activities, scenery and cool weather, not the food. Brinchang's abundance of Chinese restaurants are for the most part indistinguishable.

Smokehouse

ENGLISH \$\$

(Map p128; www.thesmokehousehotel.com; ☎breakfast, lunch & dinner) Located in the hotel of the same name, this restaurant specialises in English cuisine – think roasts, meat pies, fish and chips, and bangers and mash – much of it done quite well, and served in a setting that is as English as the food. It doesn't come cheap though, and a more economic alternative might be one of the afternoon tea sets (RM25 to RM33) available throughout the day. The Smokehouse is located about 2km north of Tanah Rata; a taxi here will cost RM8.

KouGen

JAPANESE, INTERNATIONAL \$\$

(Map p131; 35 Jln Besar, Tanah Rata; mains RM13.90-20.90; ☎11am-9pm) Run by an apparent Japanophile from KL, this new restaurant does a mix of traditional Japanese (sushi, tempura) and the not-so-traditional (lamb stew, minced beef and pork steak). All main dishes are served with rice and soup; for something lighter go for the starters, including yakitori or Japanese-style croquettes. One of the most interesting places to eat in Tanah Rata.

Jasmine Cafe

INTERNATIONAL \$\$

(Map p131; 45 Jln Besar, Tanah Rata; mains RM7-33; ☎noon-9pm; ☎) Get ready for some cultural confusion here: Jasmine Cafe is a Dutch-themed restaurant that serves mostly Western-style food prepared by an ethnic Chinese chef. Against all odds it works, and dishes such as the peppery chicken chop, particularly if accompanied by a glass of fresh strawberry juice, are some of the tastiest in town.

Lord's Cafe

CAFE \$

(Map p131; Jln Besar, Tanah Rata; mains RM2.50-4.90; ☎10am-9pm Mon-Fri, to 6pm Sat) This cosy cafe serves what are allegedly the Cameron Highlands' best scones – in addition to a variety of teas and no shortage of Christian scripture. Located above fast-food restaurant Marrybrown.

PARTHIPAN RAMADASS: TEA EXPERT

Parthipan Ramadass is a tour officer at Boh's Sungei Palas Estate, Cameron Highlands

What should one look for in a good cup of tea? It's for you to decide – do you like light or robust? If light, then look for light colour, texture and aroma. In terms of flavours, it should be soothing to the tongue. If you like something more robust, you should look for more colour, more tanginess and a robust taste that you can feel on your tongue.

The best way to prepare a cup of tea? Always use loose tea, not teabags – the leaves are supposed to open. The measurement is a teaspoon – one for yourself and one for the pot. Tea should be brewed with boiling water. Steep three minutes for light tea and for strong tea that you'll drink with milk, five minutes. Strain the tea as you pour.

May Flower

CHINESE \$\$

(Map p131; 72A Psn Camellia 4, Tanah Rata; hotpot per person RM16, mains RM7-24; ☎8.30am-10pm; 🍴) When in the Cameron Highlands, the locals eat hotpot (also referred to as steam-boat) and so should you. This place does a few versions of the dish, including a vegetarian hotpot.

Restoran Sri Brinchang

INDIAN \$

(Map p131; 25 Jln Besar, Tanah Rata; mains RM4-20; 🍴) This bright place serves a range of simple Indian fare, including tandoori chicken set meals, fish-head curry and vegetarian dishes.

Vintage Café

MALAY, INTERNATIONAL \$\$

(Map p131; 13 Jln Besar, Tanah Rata; mains RM6.50-40) There's not a lot that's terribly 'vintage' about this place per se, but it does serve a decent line-up of Western and Malay staples.

Restaurant Bunga Suria

INDIAN \$

(Map p131; 66A Persiaran Camellia 3, Tanah Rata; set meals RM6-10) Meat, veg, *dosa*, curry, whatever: it's all good, spicy and served in large portions on a banana leaf.

Rosedale Bistro

INTERNATIONAL \$\$

(Map p131; 42A Jln Besar, Tanah Rata; mains RM7-20) The Rosedale's thick menu spans several cuisines (Chinese, Malay, European and Indian).

i Information

The **post office**, **hospital** and **police station** are all found on Jln Besar in Tanah Rata.

i Getting There & Away

Bus

Tanah Rata's **bus station**, known as Terminal Freesia, is located at the eastern end of Jln Besar.

Destination	Duration	Fare (RM)	Frequency
Brinchang	20 min	1.50	Hourly, 6.15am-6.30pm
Kampung Raja	30 min	4	Every 2 hr 8.30am-6.30pm
Ipoh	2hr	10-18	4 daily, 8am-6pm
Kuala Lumpur	4hr	22.50-35	4 daily, 8am-4.30pm
Penang	5hr	30-35	8am, 2.30pm
Singapore	10hr	125	10am

Taxi

Taxis also wait at Terminal Freesia. Full-taxi fares are RM80 to Tapah, RM140 to Ipoh, 300 to KL and RM350 to Penang.

i Getting Around

While we never recommend hitchhiking, many travellers do so to get between Tanah Rata and Brinchang and the tea plantations beyond.

Bus

Getting between Tanah Rata and Brinchang is not a problem between 6.30am and 6.30pm, as buses run every hour or so. There are also regular buses every hour from Tanah Rata heading east to Kampung Raja, but it's more like two or three hours until the next one happens by. These buses also pass the turn-off to Gunung Brinchang and the Sungai Palas Tea Estate.

Taxi

Taxi services from Tanah Rata include Brinchang (RM6) and Ringlet (RM20); for prices on additional destinations, including hiking trailheads and tea estates, see the price list posted at the taxi stop at Terminal Freesia. For touring around, a taxi costs RM25 per hour.

Pulau Pangkor

POP 25,000

Pulau Pangkor ('Beautiful Island') is a former pirate hideout and bit-player in the battle to control the Selat Melaka (Strait of Melaka). In the 17th century, the Dutch built a fort here in their bid to monopolise the Perak tin trade, but were driven out by a local ruler before returning briefly some 50 years later. In 1874 a contender for the Perak throne sought British backing and the Pangkor Treaty was signed, ushering in British Residents and the colonial period.

These days, the only people invading the island are Malaysian weekend warriors. Pangkor doesn't see many foreign tourists, probably because its beaches aren't among Malaysia's best. Instead, the real highlight here is the low-key, village feel. The jungle interior, in particular, is wild, unexplored and isolated. During the week you've got the sand to yourself, and when it's raining on other islands, it somehow stays sunny here.

Sights

Pulau Pangkor lends itself well to exploration by motorcycle. The island's east coast is its workaday side, home to **Sungai Pinang Kecil (SPK)** and **Sungai Pinang Besar (SPB)** – two Chinese-feeling fishing villages. The road that runs along the east coast turns west at Pangkor Town and runs directly across the island to **Pasir Bogak**. The beach here is a lovely, if rather narrow, stretch of sand. It's fine for swimming, but during holidays it can get crowded. From there the road runs north to the village of **Teluk Nipah**, another busy

beach, and a good destination if you want to participate in water sports or snorkelling. Moving north, **Coral Beach** is the best (public) beach on Pangkor. The water is a clear, emerald-green colour due to the presence of limestone, and the beach is usually quite clean and pretty. The road then goes to the northern end of the island, past the airport, to Pangkor's luxury resorts and private beaches.

The island's religious gathering places also function as tourist sights.

Kota Belanda

RUIN

(Map p135) At Teluk Gedong, 3km south of Pangkor Town, is the Dutch Fort, built in 1670 and sacked in 1690. The Dutch managed to rebuild the fort in 1743; only five years later they abandoned it for good after local warrior chiefs repeatedly attacked them. The old fort was totally swallowed by jungle until 1973, when it was reconstructed as far as the remaining bricks would allow, which wasn't much.

Batu Bersurat

HISTORIC SITE

(Map p135) On the waterfront at Teluk Gedong, 3km south of Pangkor Town, is this mammoth stone carved with the symbol of the Dutch East India Company (Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie; VOC) and other graffiti, including a faint depiction of a tiger stealing a kid. Supposedly, the child of a local European dignitary disappeared while playing near the rock; the Dutch liked the idea of a tiger abduction, although she was more likely nabbed by disenchanted locals.

Pulau Pangkor

Sights

- 1 Batu Bersurat D6
- 2 Foo Ling Kong C5
- 3 Galeri Pangkor D5
- 4 Hindu Temple D4
- 5 Kota Belanda D6

Sleeping

- 6 BestStay Hotel C5
- 7 Coral Bay Resort C5
- 8 Pangkor Island Beach Resort B2
- 9 Pangkor Laut Resort B6
- 10 Pangkor Sandy Beach Resort C5
- 11 Pangkor Village Beach Resort B5

- 12 Puteri Bayu Beach Resort C5
- 13 Sea View Hotel C5
- 14 Teluk Dalam Resort C3
- 15 Tiger Rock Resort D6
- 16 Vikri Beach Resort B5

Eating

- 17 Guan Guan Seafood C5
- 18 Pangkor Kopitiam D5
- 19 Restoran Pasir Bogak C5
- Seri Ilhan (see 7)
- 20 Sin Nam Huat Seafood Restaurant D6

Pulau Pangkor

0 2 km
0 1 miles



Galeri Pangkor

MUSEUM

(Map p135; ☎8am-5pm; admission free) Overlooking the jetty is this museum featuring local handicrafts and brief displays on local history, although not many of the captions are in English.

Lin Je Kong Temple

CHINESE TEMPLE

(Map p137; ☎24hr) On the northern edge of Coral Beach, look out for this small, psychedelic temple, adorned with statues of giant mushrooms, a turtle, a mermaid and, of course, Donald Duck.

Foo Ling Kong

CHINESE TEMPLE

(Map p135; ☎7am-7pm) A busy Chinese temple complete with a mini version of the Great Wall of China climbing behind it.

Hindu Temple

HINDU TEMPLE

(Map p135; ☎7am-7pm) This south Indian temple makes for a small, colourful Dravidian explosion.

**Activities**

Snorkel gear, boats and jet skis can be hired at hotels or on the beach at Pasir Bogak and Teluk Nipah; a 15-minute **banana-boat ride** costs RM15 to RM25, and a small boat to take you **snorkelling** at small nearby islands costs around RM20 per person.

**Sleeping**

Teluk Nipah has the best beach and biggest spread of accommodation choices on Pangkor. Plenty of hotels can be found here, including several budget and midrange hotels. To the south, Pasir Bogak is home to several bigger midrange resorts and the island's best restaurants. The other developments on Pangkor are luxury resorts on isolated beaches.

Rates at most places vary, often substantially, between peak (Friday and/or Saturday and Sunday, plus holidays) and off-peak seasons; the following prices quoted are 'off-peak', available from Monday to Friday (or Sunday to Thursday) and in the low season. Finding a bed at any price during major holidays, such as Chinese New Year, can be near impossible without advance reservations.

TELUK NIPAH**Nipah Guesthouse**

GUESTHOUSE \$\$

(Map p137; ☎017-506 9259; www.pangkorbeachchalet.com; incl breakfast dm RM30, A-frame bungalows RM90, r RM120-180; ☎☎) The newest-feeling, and arguably most attractive, outfit at Teluk Nipah. Accommodation here takes

the form of cute A-frame bungalows, or rooms and dorm beds in duplex 'chalets'.

Nipah Bay Villa

GUESTHOUSE \$

(Map p137; ☎685 2198; www.nipahbay.com; r RM40-150; ☎☎) One of the oldest accommodation options on the island; the owners, Mr and Mrs Sabtu, are incredibly friendly and have seen it all on Pangkor. The chalets are in good nick, and the clean and inviting compound has a cafe/restaurant and massages available.

Budget Beach Resort

HOTEL \$

(Map p137; ☎685 3529; www.budgetbeachresort.com; r RM75-120; ☎☎) The somewhat self-deprecating name doesn't do justice to the simple but neat wood chalets here, all equipped with air-con and TV. Service is friendly and professional.

Anjungan

HOTEL \$\$

(Map p137; ☎685 1500; www.anjunganresortpangkor.com; r RM160-250; ☎☎☎) The most upscale and stylish place at Teluk Nipah; the 44 rooms here are found in a condolike building surrounding a pool. Deluxe rooms are slightly larger and face the pool, and the whole place exudes a family-friendly feel.

Nazri Nipah Camp

GUESTHOUSE \$

(Map p137; ☎012-585 4511; dm/r RM15/30-70; ☎☎) This place claims to be one of the first places to go up at Teluk Nipah, and boasts a chilled-out reggae theme. Accommodation ranges from simple A-frames to more comfortable chalets with bathrooms. It also has a secluded beer garden and a TV lounge.

Palma Beach Resort

HOTEL \$\$

(Map p137; ☎685 3693; www.palmabeachresort.com.my; r RM95-140; ☎☎) Hotel-like rooms, equipped with TV and air-con, in a cement block. Clean and well maintained.

Flora Beach

GUESTHOUSE \$

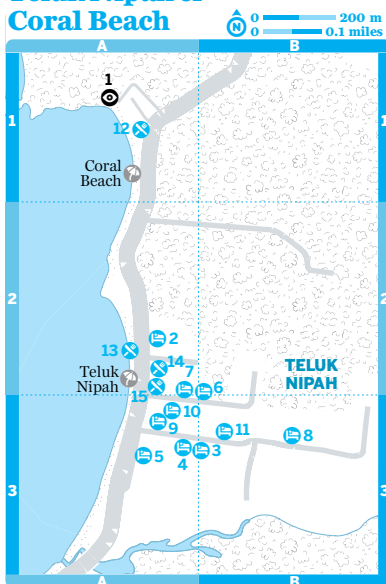
(Map p137; ☎685 3878; www.florabeachresort.com; r RM85-100; ☎☎) A string of tidy, attractive semidetached wooden chalets. The interiors aren't quite as flash as you'd expect from the exteriors, but they're clean, and the service is friendly.

Pangkor Bayview

HOTEL \$\$

(Map p137; ☎685 3540; www.pangkorbayview.com; r from RM105-150; ☎☎) This is one of the few midrange hotels on the island with a pool. Inside it features slightly worn rooms and chalets.

Teluk Nipah & Coral Beach



Pangkor Indah Beach Resort GUESTHOUSE \$
(Map p137; ☎685 2107; www.pangkorindah.com; r RM65; 🍽️🚿) They may not have much character, but the 48 rooms here are clean, good-value and equipped with air-con and TV.

Horizon Inn GUESTHOUSE \$
(Map p137; ☎685 3398; r RM80-90; 🍽️🚿) Located above the restaurant of the same name, the 16 rooms here are plain but cosy.

Hornbill Resort GUESTHOUSE \$\$
(Map p137; ☎685 2005; www.pangkorhornbillresort.com; r RM100-250; 🍽️) Right across the street from the beach, this basic resort features rooms that are nicer than the rather plain exterior suggests.

PASIR BOGAK

Pangkor Sandy Beach Resort RESORT \$\$
(Map p135; ☎685 3027; www.pangkorsandybeach.com; incl breakfast r RM175-325, bungalows RM175; 🍽️🚿🚿) The youngest resort in a 'hood filled with old-timers. Rooms edge an inviting pool and there are three beachfront bungalows.

Vikri Beach Resort RESORT \$\$
(Map p135; ☎685 4258; http://vikribr.googlepages.com; r RM100-200; 🍽️🚿) Vikri has a dozen simple but cosy wooden and brick chalets located in scrappy gardens across the road from

Teluk Nipah & Coral Beach

Sights

- 1 Lin Je Kong Temple A1

Sleeping

- 2 Anjungan A2
3 Budget Beach Resort B3
4 Flora Beach A3
Horizon Inn (see 14)
5 Hornbill Resort A3
6 Nazri Nipah Camp B2
7 Nipah Bay Villa A2
8 Nipah Guesthouse B3
9 Palma Beach Resort A3
10 Pangkor Bayview A3
11 Pangkor Indah Beach Resort B3

Eating

- 12 Daddy's Café A1
13 Evening Seafood Stalls A2
14 Horizon Restaurant A2
15 Nasi Campur A2

the beach. More attractive are the newer 'hill view' bungalows out back. It's a peaceful, homely environment, with a kitchen serving up home-cooked Indian food (with advance notice, and for hotel guests only) and a very friendly, almost motherly staff.

Coral Bay Resort HOTEL \$\$
(Map p135; ☎685 5111; www.pangkorcoralbay.com.my; incl breakfast r/st RM160-330/340; 🍽️🚿🚿) Ostensibly the tallest building on the island, this condo-feeling tower is filled with large and well-equipped, if dull, rooms that surround a pool.

Sea View Hotel RESORT \$\$
(Map p135; ☎685 1605; www.seaviewpangkor.com; incl breakfast r RM150-180, bungalows RM200-250; 🍽️🚿) This beachfront place has that old-school, seafaring holiday vibe you may recall from family vacations (and indeed, most guests are Malaysian families). There's an inviting, palm-fringed pool, though the spartan brick bungalows have a somewhat institutional feel.

Puteri Bayu Beach Resort RESORT \$\$
(Map p135; ☎685 1929; www.puteribayu.com; incl breakfast RM120-175, bungalows RM200-450; 🍽️🚿) This vast compound, set in landscaped gardens on the beach, has a choice of adequate hotel rooms and more attractive wooden chalets.

Pangkor Village Beach Resort RESORT \$\$\$
(Map p135; ☎685 2227; www.pangkorvillageresort.com; r RM100-180; 🍽️🍹) Rather plain wood and concrete bungalows at the northern end of Pasir Bogak. The complex is located right on the beach – a relative rarity on Pangkor – although the proximity of water sports does mean that noise can be an issue.

ELSEWHERE ON THE ISLAND

TOP CHOICE Tiger Rock Resort BOUTIQUE HOTEL \$\$\$
(Map p135; ☎019-574 7183; www.tigerrock.info; full board RM630-790; 🍽️🍹🍷) For something truly different, consider a stay in one of these five cosy and stylish houses, each one decked out in the individual design tastes and assorted knick-knacks of the owners. Whichever house you stay in, there's always a feeling of jungly isolation thanks to the secluded location of the 5 acre grounds. Note that the hotel doesn't accept walk-ins, and reservations must be made at least a couple of days in advance. Tiger Rock is found in a somewhat concealed location behind Kota Belanda, at Teluk Gedong; hotel staff can provide transport or directions.

Pangkor Island Beach Resort RESORT \$\$\$
(Map p135; ☎685 1091; www.pangkorislandbeach.com; incl breakfast r RM452-742, bungalows RM905-1020; 🍽️🍹🍷) This large, secluded resort is located on a private sandy bay at Teluk Belanga, at the northern end of the island, and is the most luxurious spot on Pangkor. Some of the rooms would benefit from a fresh coat of paint, but the traditionally styled 'sea villas' are superb. A highlight is the private beach – probably Pangkor's best – and recreational facilities include two pools, tennis courts and a spa. There are organised activities for children.

Teluk Dalam Resort RESORT \$\$\$
(Map p135; ☎685 5000; www.pangkorresorts.com; incl breakfast r RM230-360; 🍽️🍹) Fronting a wide bay at the northern end of the island is this peaceful four-star resort. The rustic wooden chalets and bungalows are set in landscaped gardens overlooking the sea. It's a little isolated and the beach isn't great, but there's a tennis court and a children's pool as well as organised trips and activities.

BestStay Hotel HOTEL \$
(Map p135; ☎685 3111; www.beststay.com.my; r RM70-130; 🍽️🍹) A new-feeling hotel a brief walk from Pangkor Town and the jetty. Rooms are largely plain, but this is more

than made up for by the kind and outgoing hosts, Simon and Rachel.

PANGKOR LAUT
Pangkor Laut Resort RESORT \$\$\$
(Map p135; ☎699 1100; www.pangkorlautresort.com; incl breakfast r RM960-1070, bungalow RM1680-1990; 🍽️🍹🍷) The tiny, private island of Pangkor Laut, just opposite Pasir Bogak, is occupied by one of Malaysia's most exclusive tourist developments. This ridiculously luxurious resort is speckled with hillside, seafront and above-water villas stocked with king-sized beds, balconies and huge bathrooms. There are also private 'estates' – uniquely designed houses, with two to four bedrooms, private pools and gardens, on a secluded bay away from the main resort. Every conceivable amenity is at hand, and the resort boasts seven dining outlets, a private beach and a spa village.

Eating & Drinking

TELUK NIPAH & CORAL BEACH

Daddy's Café INTERNATIONAL \$\$
(Map p137; mains RM14-48; ☺11am-11pm) Located at Coral Beach, the 'Dinner Mega Entree' at Daddy's features a decent spread of hearty Indian set meals, as well as Western and local dishes. But the best reason to visit comes at dinner, when Daddy's puts tables directly on the beach.

Horizon Restaurant MALAYSIAN \$\$
(Map p137; mains RM9-28; ☺2-10pm) This long-standing place has sunset views, alfresco dining and a mix of consistently tasty Chinese and Malaysian seafood and curries. Prices are relatively high and opening times can be unpredictable.

Evening Seafood Stalls MALAY \$
(Map p137; mains RM3-20; ☺dinner) Every night, the strip of road that backs Teluk Nipah is host to several informal restaurants selling Malay-style seafood dishes.

Nasi Campur MALAY \$
(Map p137; mains RM2-6; ☺breakfast, lunch & dinner) Locals stop here for cheap and tasty Malay dishes. After dark, pickings tend to be slim.

PASIR BOGAK
This is easily Pangkor's best eating 'hood. Even if you're not staying here, it's worth making the trip for at least one dinner.

TOP CHOICE Seri Ilhan

(Map p135; mains RM4-30; ☺dinner) A roadside, Malay-style seafood shack, this place put together our most memorable meal on Pulau Pangkor. Try the rich *sup tulang* (bone soup) accompanied with a spicy grilled stingray. If you've got a serious sweet tooth, try the ABC – shaved ice drizzled with flavoured syrups and topped with ice cream.

Restoran Pasir Bogak

CHINESE \$\$

(Map p135; mains RM8-44; ☺dinner) This is where locals go for a Chinese-style seafood splurge and a beer – we suspect they carry every local brand of the latter. Make a point of ordering the dry chilly chicken, served with a rich, spicy paste and curry leaves – it's Chinese-Indian-Malay fusion that works a treat.

Guan Guan Seafood CHINESE, INTERNATIONAL \$\$

(Map p135; mains RM7-20; ☺lunch & dinner) A simple Chinese-style seafood place doing solid versions of the usual beachy faves, as well as a few quasi-Western dishes.

PANGKOR TOWN

There are a few busy Chinese *kedai kopi* (coffee shops) in Pangkor Town, and if you've got your own wheels, the village of Sungai Pinang Besar is a great place for an old-school Chinese-style breakfast.

Sin Nam Huat
Seafood Restaurant CHINESE \$\$

(Map p135; mains RM10-35; ☺lunch & dinner) Longstanding place, good for crab, lobster and prawn dishes, and it serves beer late into the night. Sin Nam Huat is located at the southern end of Pangkor Town.

Pangkor Kopitiam MALAY \$

(Map p135; mains RM4.50-18.90; ☺8am-11pm) Local-style tea and coffee drinks in air-con comfort, looking over the jetty. It also does a brief menu of fried rice-type dishes.

i Information

The island's **hospital** and **police station** are just west of Pangkor Town, on the road towards Pasir Bogak. There are a couple of banks and an internet cafe in Pangkor Town.

i Getting There & Away

Lumut is the land gateway for Pulau Pangkor. The town is serviced by many buses, but if you get stuck, you could always crash at the **Hotel DJ Palace** (☎683 7888; www.dj.my; r RM80-130; ☎☎), located across the street from the bus station.

Air

Pangkor's tiny airport is serviced by **Berjaya Air** (☎685 1061; www.berjaya-air.com; Pangkor Airport; ☺8am-6pm), which runs flights between Pulau Pangkor and Kuala Lumpur's Subang airport (40 minutes, RM224) every Sunday, Wednesday and Friday.

Boat

Mesra Feri and **Duta Pangkor Ferry** run boats every 30 minutes/45 minutes on an alternating basis from Lumut's jetty between 7am and 8.30pm (round-trip RM10). Many ferries from Lumut stop at SPK before reaching Pangkor Town, so don't hop off too soon. From Pangkor, boats run between 6.30am and 8.30pm. Tickets can be bought at either pier and outside of busy holidays, advance booking is not necessary.

Pangkor Island Beach Resort, Teluk Dalam Resort and Pangkor Laut Resort are all served by their own ferry service from Lumut.

Bus

Lumut's scruffy bus station is a brief walk from the jetty to Pulau Pangkor and is well connected to points elsewhere in Malaysia and abroad.

Destination	Duration (hr)	Fare (RM)	Frequency
Ipoh	2	7.20-8.50	Every 30 min, 7.30am-10.30pm
Butterworth	3½	16.30-19.60	Frequent, 8.30am-6.30pm
Kuala Lumpur	4	24.50	Frequent, 7.30am-10.30pm
Melaka	8	38	Frequent, 8.15am-8pm
Kota Bharu	8	40.30	9.45am & 9.45pm
Singapore	8-9	56	Frequent, 9-10am & 7-9pm
Hat Yai (Thailand)	9	58	8.30am & 10.30pm

i Getting Around

There are no public buses available to tourists, so you will be obliged to use Pangkor's candy-pink minibus taxis, which operate between 6.30am and 9pm. Set-fare services for up to four people from the jetty in Pangkor Town include Pasir Bogak (RM10), Teluk Nipah (RM15),

Pangkor Island Beach Resort (RM20) and the airport (RM20). Travel between Teluk Nipah and Pasir Bogak will cost you RM10.

An ideal way to see the island is by motorcycle or bicycle. There are numerous places at Pangkor Town, Pasir Bogak and Teluk Nipah that rent motorcycles from around RM30 per day and bicycles for RM15.

Kuala Kangsar

POP 39,000

An easy-going town with a deep-seated sense of Malay ethnic identity, Kuala Kangsar, seat of the sultan of Perak, is one of the most pleasant royal capitals in Malaysia. It has also sat at the centre of many of the events of the past two centuries that defined modern Malaysia: first foothold of the British, who moved to control the peninsula by installing residents at the royal courts here in the 1870s; birthplace of Malaysia's rubber industry; and site of the first Durbar, or conference of Malay sultans in 1897. Yet by the 1890s, the rapid growth of Ipoh and Taiping had left Kuala Kangsar a quiet backwater steeped in Malay tradition.

The small town centre is something of a scruffy jumble, but to the southeast the royal district is spacious and quiet. The main sights are few, but they're impressive and can easily be explored on a day trip from Taiping or Ipoh.



Sights

Masjid Ubudiah

MOSQUE

(Ubudiah Mosque; Map p141; Jln Istana; admission by donation; ☉7am-6pm) Heading out on Jln Istana beside the wide Sungai Perak, the first striking example of the wealth of the sultanate is this small but magnificent mosque, designed by AB Hubbock, the architect of many of Ipoh's colonial edifices. The mosque, with its huge golden onion-dome, was begun in 1913 but, due to wartime delays and the smashing of imported Italian marble by ram-

ping elephants, wasn't completed until 1917. The caretaker will show you around the outside of the building for a small donation, but non-Muslims are not allowed inside.



Istana Kenangan

MUSEUM

(Map p141; Jln Istana; ☉9.30am-5.30pm, 9.30am-12.15pm & 2.45-5.30pm Sat) Also known as the Palace of Memories, Istana Kenangan is made entirely of wood and woven bamboo, without the use of a single nail. It was built in 1931 and served as the temporary royal quarters until the nearby Istana Iskandariah, the current residence of the sultan of Perak, was completed. Today, the structure is home to a museum with displays on the state's history and the Perak royal family, although it was in the process of being renovated when we stopped by.

Istana Kota

MUSEUM

(Map p141; Jln Istana; admission adult/child RM4/2; ☉10am-5pm Sat-Thu, 10am-noon & 2.45-5pm Fri) The Istana Kota is a beautifully restored former royal palace, incorporating Renaissance and neoclassical elements; it could put you in mind of a Mexican villa on a sunny day. Built in 1903, it now hosts an exhibition honouring the life of the current sultan of Perak, Sultan Azlan Shah: see his sunglasses, passport, shoes and a separate building that holds his five Rolls Royces, Louis Vuitton luggage and official state gifts. It's a tough life, clearly.

Istana Iskandariah

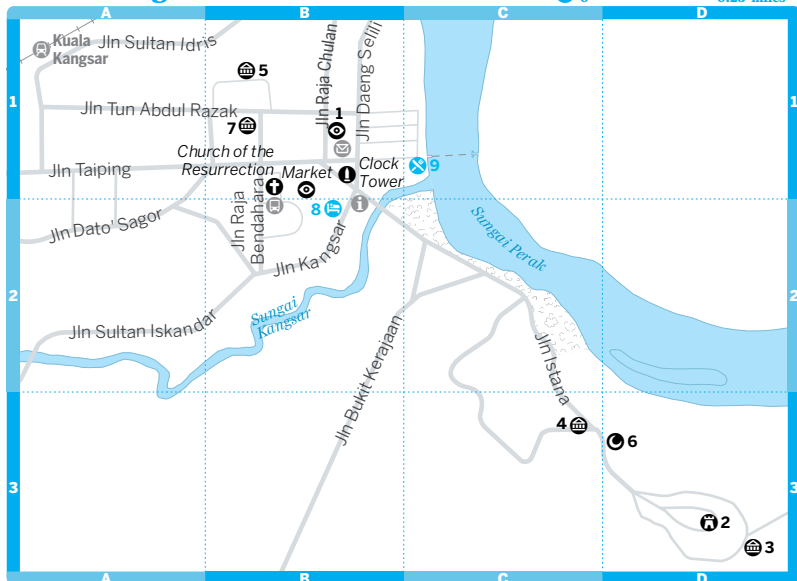
PALACE

(Map p141; Jln Istana) Overlooking the river is this palace, the official residence of the sultan of Perak and arguably the most attractive royal palace in Malaysia. Built in 1933, the building is an intriguing mix of Arab and art-deco architectural styles; if you could combine the hotels in Miami's South Beach with a mosque, it might end up looking something like this. The palace is not open to the public.

RUBBERY FACTS

In the late 1870s, a number of rubber trees were planted by British Resident Sir Hugh Low in his gardens in Kuala Kangsar from seed stock allegedly smuggled out of Brazil or taken from London's Kew Gardens. However, it was not until the invention of the pneumatic tyre in 1888, and then the popularity of the motorcar at the start of the 20th century, that rubber suddenly came into demand and rubber plantations sprang up across the country. Almost all of the trees in the new plantations were descended from Low's original rubber trees or from the Singapore Botanic Gardens. You can still see one of those first trees in Kuala Kangsar's **District Office** (Map p141; Jln Raja Chulan) compound.

Kuala Kangsar



Kuala Kangsar

Sights

- 1 District Office B1
- 2 Istana Iskandariah D3
- 3 Istana Kenangan D3
- 4 Istana Kota C3
- 5 Malay College B1
- 6 Masjid Ubudiah D3
- 7 Pavillion Square Tower B1

Sleeping

- 8 Kangsar Hotel B2

Eating

- 9 Medan Cendol Dan Laksa C1

the surrounding parkland and playing fields. Built in 1930, this small three-storey sports pavilion of Malay and colonial design allowed royalty and VIPs to view polo matches in comfort. Not open to the public.

Sleeping & Eating

Kuala Kangsar is an easy day trip from either Ipoh or Taiping, and there's really no reason to stay. In addition to the food hall below, there are numerous coffee shops and fast-food outlets around the town centre.

Kangsar Hotel

BUDGET HOTEL \$

(Map p141; ☎776 7301; www.kangsar-hotel.com; 32 Jln Kangsar; r RM69-128;) Basic but bright and clean rooms in the centre of town.

Malay College

HISTORIC BUILDING

(Map p141; Jln Tun Abdul Razak) To the north of town is the most impressive colonial building in Kuala Kangsar. Established in 1905, it was the first Malay school to provide English education for the Malay elite destined for the civil service. In the 1950s Anthony Burgess wrote his first book while teaching here. Not open to the public.

Pavillion Square Tower

HISTORIC BUILDING

(Map p141; Jln Raja Bendahara) Opposite the Malay College is a delightful tower overlooking

Medan Cendol Dan Laksa

MALAY \$

(Map p141; Cnr Jln Temenggong & Psn Sungai Perak; mains from RM2;) As the name suggests, this open-air food hall is entirely devoted to various laksa dishes, *cendol* (shaved ice, coconut milk and palm-sugar syrup) and soft drinks.

Information

There are banks with ATMs along the main strip Jln Kangsar.

Tourist Information Centre (Jln Kangsar; ☎9am-6pm Tues-Sun) Privately run tourist office with a decent amount of brochures and helpful English-speaking staff.

i Getting There & Away

The **bus station** (Jln Raja Bendahara) is located near the city centre. Destinations include:

Destination	Duration (hr)	Cost (RM)	Frequency
Taiping	1	3.90	Every 30min, 6am-8.30pm
Ipoh	1½	6.20	Every 20min, 6am-7.35pm
Butterworth	2	9.90	11.15am & 4.15pm
Lumut	2	10.40	5pm & 10pm
Kuala Lumpur	3	22.20	Hourly, 9am-9pm
Kota Bharu	5	29.10	10.30am & 11pm

Kuala Kangsar's **train station** is located, less conveniently, to the northwest of town. All Kuala Lumpur-Butterworth trains stop here. There are four daily trains to KL (RM26 to RM49, 3½ hours) and three to Butterworth (RM17 to RM28, four hours); check with www.ktmb.com.my for the latest info on fares and schedules.

Taiping

POP 212,562

At first glance, Taiping may not appear to offer much, but scratch the surface and you'll find one of Malaysia's most well-preserved colonial towns. Not surprisingly, tourist brochures still boast of Taiping's '31 Firsts' for Malaysia, including the first museum; first railway; first newspapers in English, Malay and Tamil; and first zoo. Today, the town is a pleasing, quiet little place with a nice colonial district and great street food.

👁 Sights & Activities

FREE Muzium Perak

MUSEUM

(Jln Taming Sari; ☎9am-5.30pm Sat-Thu, 9am-12.25pm & 2.45-5.30pm Fri) Perak's State Museum is housed in an impressive colonial building. Correspondingly, it's the oldest museum in Malaysia, having opened in 1883 – a fact evidenced by the rather motley collection of stuffed animals in the Natural Life section. There are several displays on the Orang Asli, and the cultural collection includes traditional

kris (daggers), carvings and costumes, with a fair bit of English-language explanation.

Zoo Taiping & Night Safari

ZOO

(www.zootaiping.gov.my; Jln Taman Tasik; adult/child RM12/8, night safari adult/child RM16/10; ☎8.30am-6pm daily, night safari 8-11pm Sun-Fri & 8pm-midnight Sat) If they're not snoozing in the midday heat, you can see all manner of creatures, including elephants, tigers, Malaysian sun bears and tapirs, lolling about. The zoo's **night safari**, billed as Malaysia's first, provides a better chance of seeing nocturnal animals beginning to stir, such as fishing bats, slow lorises and big cats. Zoo Taiping is located about 2km east of central Taiping; a taxi here will cost RM10.

Taman Tasik Taiping

GARDENS

(Lake Gardens; Map p143; Jln Kamunting Lama) Taiping is renowned for its beautiful 62-hectare gardens, built in 1880 on the site of an abandoned tin mine. The gardens owe their lush greenery to the fact that Taiping's annual rainfall is one of the highest in Peninsular Malaysia – hence the nickname 'Rain City'.

All Saints' Church

CHURCH

(Map p143; Jln Taming Sari; ☎8-noon Sun) This church, dating back to 1886, is one of the oldest Anglican churches in Malaysia. The cemetery contains the graves of early colonial settlers, most of whom died of tropical diseases or failed to achieve the colonial pension needed to return home to Britain or Australia.

Commonwealth Allied War Cemetery

CEMETERY

(Jln Bukit Larut; ☎24hr) This small cemetery has row upon row of headstones for the British, Australian and Indian troops killed during WWII. The cemetery is located about 2km east of central Taiping, along the way to Bukit Larut; a taxi here costs RM10.

Ling Nam Temple

TEMPLE

(Jln Taming Sari; ☎7am-6pm) This colourful, gaudy temple is the oldest Chinese temple in Perak. There's sadly not much left apart from a boat figure dedicated to the emperor who built China's first canal.

Perak Prison

HISTORIC BUILDING

(Map p143; Jln Taming Sari) Opposite Muzium Perak, the prison, built in 1879 to house lawless miners, was used by the Japanese during WWII and later as a rehabilitation centre for captured communists during the

START PERPUSTAKAAN MERDEKA
FINISH HOTEL PEACE
DISTANCE 2KM
DURATION ONE TO TWO HOURS



Walking Tour Colonial Taiping

Taiping's former role as a prosperous and important colonial-era outpost is still palpable in the town's unique and well-preserved architecture. This walking tour takes in Taiping's most notable colonial-era buildings, from religious monuments to state institutions.

Start at **1 Perustakaan Merdeka** (1882), the Independence Library. Nearby, the neoclassical **2 District Office** is on Jln Alang Ahmad. Continue south along Jln Kota until you reach **3 Jam Besar Lama** (1890), the Old Clock Tower, which once functioned as Taiping's fire station and now houses the tourist information centre.

Turn right at Jln Lim Tee Hooi. Upon reaching Jln Stesyen, on your left is the **4 Town Rest House** (1894), formerly the governor's residence (it was being renovated when we were in town). Across Jln Stesyen is the gracious, colonial **5 King Edward VII School** (1905), the classrooms of which were used as torture chambers by the Japanese during WWII. Taiping's original **6 train station** is a

few steps west; Taiping was the starting point for Malaysia's first railway line, now defunct. Opened in 1885, it ran 13.5km to Port Weld (Kuala Sepetang).

Further west on Jln Stesyen is **7 St George's School** (1915). Head south on Jln Iskandar then turn right onto Jln Taming Sari; here you'll find Taiping's tiny **8 Little India**. Follow the street west until Jln Masjid; opposite you'll see the **9 Old Kota Mosque** (1897), the oldest in Taiping, mainly of note for its hexagonal design.

Moving south along Jln Masjid, turn left on Jln Panggong Wayang, where you'll see the **10 Hotel Peace**; the Peranakan architecture of this building has stucco tiles, stained glass and beautifully carved bird and flower designs on the upper-wall dividers inside. The coffee shop downstairs is a good spot for a beer, but the scruffy hotel upstairs should be avoided.

midrange amenities, and rooms are large and brightly furnished. Expect a discount of up to 50% off the published rates.

Hotel Seri Malaysia

HOTEL \$\$

(☎806 9502; www.serimalaysia.com.my; 4 Jln Sultan Mansor; r incl breakfast RM140-160; ④④④④) The large rooms (family rooms can accommodate three or four people) and pool make this a great choice for families, although the distance from the centre of town makes private transport necessary.

Cherry Inn

HOTEL \$

(Map p143; ☎805 2223; 17 Jln Stesyen; r RM60-120; ④④) The exterior speaks of comfy little inn, while the interior resembles a museum dedicated to Chinese kitsch. Confusing things even further, the rooms here are actually quite plain (but clean). A fully-equipped two-bedroom apartment is also available for RM250. Conveniently located.

Kama Lodge

HOTEL \$\$

(☎806 1777; 7 Jln Bukit Larut; r/ste RM160-200/300-320; ④④) Wedding-cake duplex bungalows surround a child-friendly pool in a semirural setting. The rooms are somewhat drab and musty, but this is a good, quiet and affordable choice for families, although guests will need to have their own car – Kama is 1km east of town, along the way to Bukit Larut.



Eating

Bismillah Restoran

MALAY \$

(Map p143; 138 Jln Taming Sari; mains from RM3; ☎7am-5pm) Your typical *nasi kandar* (Indian/Malaysian-style dishes served over

rice) restaurant found all over Malaysia; the biryani here is particularly tasty.

Annapoorana

INDIAN \$

(Map p143; Jln Taming Sari; mains from RM3; ☎9am-9pm) This shophouse restaurant offers a mix of southern Indian and Nepali dishes; fresh chapattis and vegetarian rice sets define the latter.

Information

You'll find a few banks with ATMs along Jln Kota.

Tourist Information Centre

(355 Jln Kota; ☎10am-5pm) Located in the former clock tower, this office offers a few brochures, but little information is available in English, and the same goes for the staff.

Getting There & Away

Taiping's long-distance bus station, Kemunting Raya, is 7km north of the town centre, at Kemunting – hop on bus 8 (RM1.20, 6am to 8.30pm) to get to/from the local bus station, or take a taxi (RM10) to the town centre. Destinations include:

Destination	Duration (hr)	Fare (RM)	Frequency
Ipoh	1½	8.40	Frequent, 7am-6.30pm
Butterworth	2	7	Hourly, 6.30am-8.40pm
Kuala Lumpur	4	23	Every 30min, 6.30am-10.30pm
Kota Bharu	8	31.90	10.45am
Singapore	9	55	11am, 9pm, 10.30pm & 11pm

STREET FOOD CITY

Despite being a heck of a lot smaller, Taiping just about rivals George Town in the street-food department.

Kedai Kopi Prima (Map p143; cnr Jln Kota & Jln Manecksha; mains from RM3; ☎10am-midnight) This big, busy Chinese coffee shop spills out onto the street in the evenings, with several vendors selling a mix of Chinese and Malay dishes. Big-screen TVs, music and endless crowds make for a lively atmosphere.

Pusat Makanan Taman Tasik (Map p143; Jln Maharaja Lela; mains from RM3; ☎24hr) A busy hawker court/coffee shop with a good selection of mostly Chinese stalls.

Pusat Penjaja Taiping (Map p143; Jln Tupai; mains from RM3; ☎9am-11pm) Open-air food court with a mix of vendors. Open at lunch but busier at night.

Larut Matang Food Court (Map p143; Jln Panggung Wayang; mains from RM3; ☎11am-7pm) Busiest at lunch, this gritty court is half Chinese and half Malay; the offerings at the latter generally get more takers, but you'll need to get there before 7pm.

Local buses leave from the local bus station across the street from Masjid Daerah Taiping; **taxis** depart from the Central Market. Destinations include Kuala Kangsar, with departures every half hour from 6am to 8.30pm (one hour, RM3.90), and Lumut (for Pulau Pangkor), with one daily departure at 7am (three hours, RM10).

Taiping's train station is 1km west of the town centre, on the Kuala Lumpur–Butterworth line. There are four daily trains to Kuala Lumpur (RM28 to RM53, four to 5½ hours) and three to Butterworth (RM15 to RM23, around two hours).

Around Taiping

BUKIT LARUT

Crouched in a wet and cool colonial atmosphere some 1019m above sea level is **Bukit Larut** (Maxwell Hill), the oldest hill station in Malaysia. It's not nearly as developed as the Cameron Highlands, and while the scenery is a little less dramatic, there's more of a sense of what hill stations were originally about: elegant bungalows, quiet lanes, sweet-smelling gardens and not much more noise than the wind in the leaves. There are no attractions other than the above, which suits some folks just fine.

Few people visit Bukit Larut, however – in fact, bungalows here only accommodate around 70 visitors. During the school holidays, all are full. Even if you don't stay, Bukit Larut can be an excellent day trip. Getting up to the hill station is half the fun, and once there, you've got excellent opportunities for walks and fine views over Taiping far below.

👁 Sights & Activities

Most visitors go up and back by Land Rover, though the hill is also a favourite with locals who walk up in the mornings. It's a very scenic path, but don't imagine this is some casual stroll – you need to be fit to complete the walk, which spans more than 10km and can take as long as four hours.

The Land Rovers take visitors as far as KM10.3, home to a few state-run bungalows and a sporadically manned visitor centre. Beyond this point, walking along the main road, with rich forest on either side, is pleasant enough, and at the summit of the mountain – an additional 30-minute walk – a rougher trail leads off the main road from between the two transmission towers. The trail follows a practically abandoned path to Gunung Hijau (1448m). You can usually

only follow the leech-ridden path for about 15 minutes to an old pumping station (now functioning as a small Shiva shrine), but even on this short walk there's a good chance of seeing monkeys and numerous birds. Beyond the shrine the trail is periodically cleared but quickly becomes overgrown; it's advisable to take a guide with you. If you do make it to the summit, on clear days you can see clear out to the Selat Melaka (Strait of Melaka).

🏠 Sleeping & Eating

In addition to the below, there are quite a few more private bungalows for rent on Bukit Larut; details and reservations can be obtained at the Land Rover station.

Cendana Hut

HOTEL \$\$

(☎806 2777; r 110-170) This hilltop villa is the only accommodation on Bukit Larut that offers rooms, as opposed to entire bungalows. Cendana is also home to the only restaurant (serving simple Malaysian dishes; mains RM2.50 to RM7) on Bukit Larut. The downside is that the rooms – despite having names like Monte Carlo and Christmas Marvel – are past their prime and are rather musty, making them overpriced. Cendana is a short walk uphill from KM10.3. The views from here are great.

Government Bungalows

BUNGALOW \$\$

(☎807 7241; bungalow RM150-300) The government oversees three bungalows located around the Land Rover stop at KM10.3. The bungalows can accommodate up to 10 people and come complete with kitchens – a necessity, as there's only one restaurant on Bukit Larut. Call ahead or inquire at the Land Rover station.

📍 Getting There & Away

Prior to WWII, you had the choice of walking, riding a pony or being carried up in a sedan chair, as there was no road to the station. Today there's a road, but private cars are not allowed on it – it's only open to government Land Rovers, which run a regular service (round-trip RM6) from the station at the foot of the hill; a taxi here from Taiping should cost RM10. In theory, the Land Rovers operate roughly every hour on the hour from 8am to 3pm, but they usually only run when there's enough customers. The trip takes about 30 minutes.

MATANG MANGROVE FOREST RESERVE

Found outside Kuala Sepetang – still shown on some maps under its old name of Port

Weld – is this **reserve** (☉8am-5pm Mon-Fri), a small part of the mangrove forest that stretches from here up the coast of Perak towards Seberang Perai (Penang). The greater area represents almost half of all Malaysia's gazetted mangrove cover, and is one of the country's most significant nature reserves. It is particularly known for its fireflies, which light up light Christmas trees every night.

The entrance to the reserve is about 500m outside the town; ask the bus driver to let you off when you see the big gateway and sign on your right reading 'Pejabat Hutan Kecil Paya Laut'. Here a raised wooden walkway winds its way through a small section of the reserve, allowing you to explore this fascinating ecosystem without getting your feet damp. There are several signs along the route explaining, in English, what plants you are looking at and how it all works. Smooth otters, leopard cats and macaques all inhabit this landscape, though you're unlikely to see much more than the odd bird and scampering lizard unless you're here in the early morning or evening.

You can explore the mangroves further by charter boat – which allows views of the reserve's famous fireflies if you book at night – although it can get quite expensive. The reserve office can set you up with a guide, but expect to pay around RM350 to RM500 for the day.

i Getting There & Away

Blue Omnibus 77 runs every 40 minutes from 6.05am to 7pm between Taiping's local bus station and Kuala Sepetang (30 minutes, RM1.90). Buses can drop you at the reserve on request.

Royal Belum State Park

This **state park** (☎522 5125; www.royalbelum.my) in the northernmost corner of Perak is one of Peninsular Malaysia's largest stretches of virgin jungle. This green dream of a wilderness, which constitutes the Belum-Temenggor Forest, fairly seethes with birdlife and some of the nation's most dramatic megafauna: tapirs, tigers, sun bears, panthers and the endangered Sumatran rhino, whose preservation was one of the motivating factors behind gazettement of the park.

Visiting the state park requires advance permission, which can be arranged by just about any hotel in the area at least one week in advance. Otherwise, the resorts below

all offer various excursions into the jungle south of the park. Because much of the area was inundated after Temenggor Dam was completed in 1972, all excursions are conducted by boat.

🛏 Sleeping & Eating

Although none of the below is located in the state park, each is well positioned for excursions in and around the protected area.



Belum Eco Resort

RESORT \$\$

(☎012-524 9184; www.belumecoresort.com.my; all-inclusive 3-day/2-night package per person RM590) Be a guest of the Khong family on their own private island – previously a mountaintop before the Temenggor Dam was built. Accommodation here is in a houseboat, bungalow or villa, and the fee includes boat transport to and from the island, all meals and accommodation, and excursions including a visit to an Orang Asli village and jungle trekking to a waterfall and rafflesia flower. Although Steve Khong is a welcoming host, it's worth mentioning that accommodation here is on the basic end of the spectrum. Book ahead to ensure a bed and to arrange transport from the jetty to Pulau Banting.

Belum Rainforest Resort

RESORT \$\$

(☎791 6800; www.belumresort.com; r incl breakfast RM288-388; 🍷🍷🍷) A smallish resort of 76 rooms successfully combining industrial (textured concrete, brick) and natural (bamboo) elements. When we visited, a spa, a pool and additional rooms were being built. As with the other resorts in the area, visits to the protected area and other outdoor pursuits can be arranged here (per person RM70 to RM351).

Jemputree

HOTEL \$\$

(☎791 2214; www.jemputreesort.com; incl breakfast r/stg RM250-380/600; 🍷🍷🍷) Looking over the lake, this huge complex (115 rooms) is clean and professional (if lacking a little character), with the Superior rooms offering great views over Temenggor Lake. Nature activities in the surrounding jungle can be arranged here.

Hotel Sun

HOTEL \$

(☎791 4797; 29 Jln Toh Shah Bandar, Gerik; r RM60-90; 🍷🍷) If you get stuck in Gerik, the transit town to Belum, you can do much worse than this new hotel behind the bus station. There are a few similar places, and several restaurants, nearby.

i Getting There & Away

There are two ways to get to Belum. The easiest is to hop on any bus bound for Kota Bharu from Butterworth, Ipoh, Kuala Kangsar or Taiping; ask the driver to drop you off at Jeti Pulau Banting for the boat to Belum Eco Resort, or at either of the other two resorts above. All are located near Hwy 76, which continues towards the Thai border and Kota Bharu; you'll be expected to pay the full fare to Kota Bharu.

Another option is to get yourself to Gerik (sometimes spelt Grik and pronounced 'Greek'), where taxis at the town's bus station will take you the remaining 40km to Jeti Pulau Banting or the resorts for RM50.

Leaving Belum, buses from Kota Bharu are unpredictable, so you'll probably have to take a

taxi to Gerik (RM50), and continue by bus from there. Departures from Gerik's bus station include the following:

Destination	Duration (hr)	Fare (RM)	Frequency
Ipoh	2	13.10	8.30am, 11am, 2pm, 4pm & 7pm
Kota Bharu	4	29.10	11.45am
Kuala Lumpur	5	30.50	9am, 10.45am, 10pm & 2am

© Lonely Planet Publications Pty Ltd. To make it easier for you to use, access to this chapter is not digitally restricted. In return, we think it's fair to ask you to use it for personal, non-commercial purposes only. In other words, please don't upload this chapter to a peer-to-peer site, mass email it to everyone you know, or resell it. See the terms and conditions on our site for a longer way of saying the above - 'Do the right thing with our content.'